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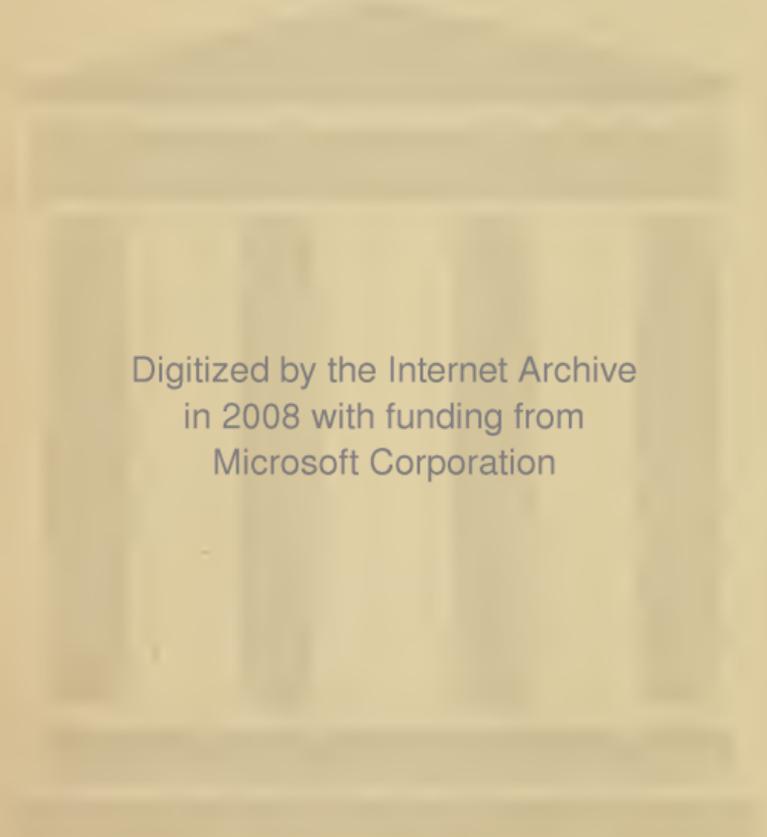


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*Ms. Julia Semmes from her friend  
W. B. Alden;*

LETTERS FROM THE SOUTH.

BY

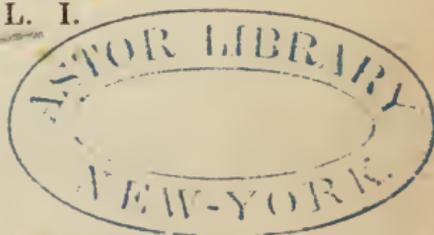
A NORTHERN MAN.

*James Kirke Paulding*

NEW EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



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## LETTERS FROM THE SOUTH.

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### LETTER I.

DEAR FRANK,

IN order to lay a solid foundation for my travels, I ought first to tell how this new world was made ; and, secondly, how it was peopled ; since, if it had never been made or peopled, it would not be worth writing about. There are two ways of making a world, lately invented by the geologists—one by fire, the other by water. I mention these to show you it is no difficult matter ; and you may take your choice of either, as people choose whether they will have their mutton roasted or boiled.

But, though it was easy enough for the philosophers to tell how America was made, the peopling of it was not quite so trifling a job, and cost them more labour than all the rest of the earth put together. The old world, it seems, was hugely surprised, at finding this thumping bantling, as it were, thus laid at its door ; and the philosophers, like faithful parish officers, set to work to ferret out the father. In this pilgrimage, they fared pretty much like the lad in the French novel, who, in a

similar pious research, discovered no less than thirty-six fathers, one after the other.

The honest aboriginals of America, not being philosophers, did not much care to what country their ancestors appertained; but the learned were good enough to oblige them, by enlightening their comprehension in this particular. For this purpose each one set out on a different track, and, what is very remarkable, each found what he was looking for, in his own opinion; although, to say the truth, some of them, assuredly, were not governed by a family likeness. One found out they were descended from Joktan, the son of Eber, son to—the Lord knows who; a second, from the Spaniards, who fled on the first invasion of Spain by the Moors; a third, from the Atlantides; a fourth, from the Scandinavians; a fifth, from the Hunns; a sixth, from the Canaanites; a seventh, from the Japanese; an eighth, from the Romans; a ninth, from the Gauls; a tenth, from the Friezlanders; an eleventh, from the Celts; a twelfth, from the Egyptians; a thirteenth, from the Phœnicians; a fifteenth—I beg pardon—a fourteenth, from the Chinese; a fifteenth, from the Norwegians; a sixteenth, from the Ethiopians; and a seventeenth, from the Anthropophagi! Here is an ancestor for every state in the union, which is enough, in all conscience, to content a reasonable man. But there are at least twenty more papas putting in for little America, which shows how anxious every body was to claim this noble offspring. Each of these supported his theory with

a pertinacity proportioned to its enormity; and, perhaps, there never was such a mass of absurdity as has been generated by this subject, useless in itself, and now beyond the reach of human research to determine.

It was to be hoped that the subject had been laid at rest in the learned lumber of the times, never to be revived. But a philosopher of our own country, whose name may be found in all the newspapers, has lately revived it; and did, what was thought utterly impossible—produced new absurdities. The flat-nosed Tartars, and Samoiedes, and all the nonsense of old Thomas Brerewood, are again conjured up, to play at foot-ball with, and tickle our learned societies. Since, however, the subject has been thus raised from the dead, I see no reason why I may not advance my theory, which, I have little doubt, will overturn and utterly demolish all others, if it ever fairly comes before the world. I have actually discovered, by the infallible aid of analogy, that America is the oldest quarter of the world, and the true hive from whence the earth was peopled after the deluge. “First recover that—and then thou shalt hear further.”

America is the largest quarter of the globe, and must therefore be the eldest born; for, taking the analogy of all nature, the largest must be the oldest, because it has had the largest time to grow; and this analogy is peculiarly applicable to the earth, which, according to the geologists, is growing lustily every day. Another proof of the superior antiquity

of America is, that, at the time of the first discovery, she had forgot her own name ; in consequence of which, the monarchs of Europe kindly christened her over again—with blood. Nothing can be a greater proof of old age, than the loss of memory ; and to forget one's name, is an infallible indication of extreme longevity. One of the weak arguments brought forward by the ignorant philosophers of Europe against the antiquity of the new world, as they choose to call it, merely because it was new to them, is, that the aborigines of America are far below the natives of Asia and Europe in learning, science, and all those arts which conduce to the delights of existence. Now this, so far from establishing their theory, is, in my mind, almost a conclusive argument in favour of mine. Do not all nations relapse into a sort of second childhood, and, in the course of ages, forget what, in the course of ages, they had learned ? What has become of the glories of Egypt, and Greece, and Italy—the most renowned nations of the ancient world ? Egypt and Greece have relapsed into barbarity, and Italy is become a nation of—fiddlers. Their glory exists only in the remembrance of what they once were ; in their arts, their warlike renown, and their ancient literature—as the science of our aborigines does in the remains of those astonishing works, whose creation is far beyond either tradition or history, and which, as they meet the eye of the stranger, as he glides down the gentle Ohio, fill him with a vague and indefinite wonder. A people may be so old as

to have forgotten every thing but the arts necessary to existence ; and this is, doubtless, the case with our aborigines. Besides, there is a wonderful difference between a people who tell their own achievements, and those who are ignorant of the noble art of writing. The former, always make the man striding over the lion, while the latter, having nobody to take care of their posthumous fame, leave, generally, but an indifferent reputation behind them. I will venture to say, that the early inhabitants of this new world performed as many impossible achievements as the Greeks, Romans, and English ! only there were, unluckily, no Herodotuses, Livys, and Venerable Bedes, to record them.

Having given such special reasons, for believing that Noah was an American, it would seem unnecessary to offer any proof, that the people of Europe, at least, are descended from the aborigines of this quarter of the world. With regard to those of Africa, there is much *colour* for the belief, that they must look for their parentage somewhere else ; and, whenever they find it, much good may it do them. It may be worth while, however, to notice a few characteristic resemblances between the Indians of America and the polished nations of Europe, that, beyond doubt, prove the paternity of the former.

The Indians are much given to high play ; so are the fashionable people abroad. The Indians neglect their wives ; so do the fashionable people abroad. The Indians are mightily given to long, pompous harangues ; so are the fashionable orators

abroad. The Indians are great smokers; so are the Dutch and Germans. The Indians are fond of high-sounding titles, such as Iron Cloud, Negro Legs, Jumping Sturgeon, Big-eared Dog, Shifting Shadow, &c.; so are the fashionable people abroad. The Indians are great beggars; so are the Italians. They are deep drinkers; they are smoky and dirty; great dancers; proud and lazy; and as vain as all the world put together. Certainly all this shows a common origin; and the logical conclusion to be drawn is, that a people, like the Indians, uniting in themselves the various and distinguishing characteristics of the principal nations of the earth, *must* be the great common ancestor of all. Another proof of this is, the propensity which the natives of those countries have for flocking to this, which, doubtless, arises from a sort of instinctive affection for the land of their forefathers. No other reason, that I know of, can philosophically account for the obstinacy with which they persist in quitting their native lands, where they live under such ancient, worn-out, and respectable governments; where they have no property, and, consequently, no cares, but to escape starvation; and where machinery is brought to such astonishing perfection, that there is hardly any use for human labour, and poor men have nothing to do, but be idle and starve, or busy themselves in politics, and be hanged.—Farewell.

## LETTER II.

DEAR FRANK,

INASMUCH as I only mean to give you a few occasional sketches of "Ould Virginia," as Captain Smith calls it, I shall content myself with merely reminding you that its first effectual settlement commenced somewhat more than two centuries ago, and a few years anterior to that of Plymouth, in Massachusetts, the oldest settlement in that quarter. Farther back than this I will not go; for, to use the words of the first historian of Virginia, so called after "the most famous, renowned, and worthie of all memorie, Queen Elizabeth"—"For the stories of Arthur, Malgo, and Brandon, that say a thousand years agoe they were in the north of America; or the Fryer of Linn, that by his black art went to the north pole, in the yeare 1360; in that I know them not. Let this suffice."

The history from whence this extract is taken is highly curious, and contains a variety of minute particulars of the dangers and hardships encountered by the early adventurers. Among these the most sagacious, brave, and enterprising, by far, was the famous Captain John Smith, who, on all occasions of emergency, acted as a sort of dictator among them. It was he that negotiated or fought with the Indians; explored the neighbouring waters, and visited the

Indian tribes on the Chesapeake and its tributary streams. He visited the "Weanoeks, Anontahocks, Appamattocks, Manahocks, Massawomocks, Kuskarawocks, Sasquasahannocks, Acquintanakoeks, Quiyoughcohanocks;" and all the names that end in *nocks*; at the end of which pilgrimage he breaks forth into the following poetic stanzas:

"Thus have I walkt a wayless way, with *uncouth* pace,  
Which yet no Christian man did ever trace,  
But yet I know this not affects the minde,  
Which eares doth heare, as that which eyes doe finde."

The first explorers of James river, called Powhatan, after the great emperor, were, it appears, subjected to a variety of inevitable hardships; sometimes were ill-governed, and not unfrequently rather difficult to govern. A writer makes the following complaints against a certain president of the colony:

"Had we," says he, "been as free from all sinnes as gluttony and drunkennesse, we might have been canonized for saintes; but our president would never have been admitted, for engrossing to his private, oat-meale, sacke oyle, *aqua vitæ*, beefe, egges, or what not, but the kettell:\* that indeed he allowed equally to be distributed, and that was halfe a pint of wheat, and as much barley, boiled with water, for a man, a day; and this being fryed some twentie-six weeks in the ship's hold, contained as many wormes as graines; so that we might trulie call it rather so much brane as corne. Our drink was water; our lodgings castles in the ayre."

\* As there was no division of property at that time, their meals were cooked in a great kettle, and divided among the company.

This notable president was deposed, and another chosen, "who," says the historian, "being little beloved, and of weake judgment in dangers, and lesse industrie in peace, committed the managing of all things abroad to Captaine Smith, who, by his owne example, good wordes, and faire promises, set some to mow, others to bind the thatch, some to build houses, others to thatch them, *himselſe bearinge the greatest taske for his owne share, so that, in a short time, he provided most of them with lodgings, neglectinge anye for himselſe.*"

How admirably this simple picture sets forth the fine character of Smith; himself the first example of industry, in procuring shelter, and the last to take advantage of it. Only give such men a sphere of action, and they will lead all mankind by the nose, whenever danger comes.

In this way Jamestown was built, on what was then the territory of the great Emperor Powhatan, a name inseparably connected with the early history of Virginia. Powhatan appears to have been a "salvage," as the phrase then was, of liberal and magnanimous principles, although he became at last an irreconcilable enemy to the white people. It appears that the "salvages," all along the coast of North America, with very few exceptions, treated the whites with hospitality, while they continued to think them mere visiters. But whenever it was discovered that they came with views of permanent settlement, a sort of vague perception of what would be the final result to themselves and their posterity,

generally converted this friendly disposition into deep, lasting, and irreconcilable hostility. Powhatan was so called from the place of his residence; but his real name was *Wahunsonack*. The person and state of "Powhatan the great emperor" is thus described.

"He is of personage a tall, well-proportioned man, with a soure look, his head somewhat gray, his beard so thinne that it seemeth none at all; his age near sixtie, of a very able and hardy body to endure anye labour. About his person ordinarilie attended fortie or fiftie of the tallest men his countrie doth afforde. Every nighte upon the foure quarters of his house are foure sentinells, each from the other a flightshoot, and at everye half houre one from the *corps du guard* doth hollow, shaking his lips with his finger between them, untoe whom every sentinell doth answer round from his stand. If anye doth faile, they presentlie send forth an officer that beateth them extreameleye."

From Jamestown they penetrated up the river by degrees to a place at the "*Falles*," where they founded a settlement, and called it *Nonsuch*, because "they knew no place so strong, so pleasant and delightful, in Virginia." This, I presume, was what is now called Richmond. I do not mean to enter into any further details of these matters; having neither time nor patience; although there is something in the fireside simplicity and minuteness of these early historians that is inexpressibly interesting to the descendants and countrymen of the first old Argonauts of this western world. But to copy these is rather a tedious job; and so I must refer you to the history

itself, which, however, is very scarce.\* In it you will read the familiar details of the progress of the colonists, the treachery of the "salvages," the gallantry of Smith—and, above all, the beautiful and romantic story of the tutelary angel Pocahontas:—how she saved Smith first, and afterward the colony from extermination—how she married "to Master John Rolfe, an honest gentleman, of good behaviour"—how she went to England, was christened Rebecca, and died, in 1617, making a "goodlie and religious ende." All this you will find told with that picturesque simplicity and nature, which so often accompanies the relations of those who tell what they have seen, and which is so infinitely preferable to the laboured and rhetorical flourishes of after writers, whose art seems to consist in spreading the least possible quantity of matter over the greatest possible surface.

Among the descendants of Pocahontas, the most remarkable are John Randolph and Bolling Robertson, both sharing an equal portion of the blood of the Indian princess, and both exhibiting in their complexion and physiognomy, indubitable marks of their origin. The eyes of both are perfectly Indian—black, shining, and occasionally fierce. Indeed, I have never met with a man having a cross of the aboriginal, that did not show it like a blood-horse. The marks seem indelible, both in body and mind.

In my visit to Washington four winters ago, it was my fortune to lodge in the same hotel with Mr.

\* It has since been reprinted.

Randolph, and to be favoured with his acquaintance, I might almost say his friendship, which, notwithstanding his alleged wayward and capricious disposition, is, I am told, generally steadfast and sincere. He is certainly the most remarkable man I have known, and on the whole the greatest orator I have ever heard. There is wit in every thing he says, and eloquence at the very end of his long fingers. He is the last man in the world, into whose hands I should wish to fall in a debate, for he cuts with a two-edged sword, and makes war like his Indian ancestors, sparing neither sex nor age. Yet his kindness is irresistible, and when he wishes to express it, the tones of his voice and the expression of his eye, go equally to the heart.

His style of oratory in congress is emphatically his own. He is indeed original and unique in every thing. Often diffusive and discursive, his language is yet simple, though polished; brief, though rich, and as direct as the arrow from the Indian bow. He often flies, apparently, from his subject, but, however he may seem to wander away, without rudder or compass, he never fails to return with a bound, illustrating it with flashes of living light. Though eccentric and wayward, in the ordinary intercourse of life, there will be found more of what is called plain common sense in his speeches than in those of any other member of congress. His illustrations are almost always drawn from the most familiar sources, and no man is so happy in allusions to fables, proverbs, and the ordinary incidents of every-day life.

He never declaims or sacrifices strength, clearness, and simplicity, to the more popular charms of redundant metaphors, and full-rounded periods. He is abrupt, sententious, and laconic. Nothing, indeed, is more easy of comprehension than the ideas and language of the great orator of Old Virginia. Though exceedingly irritable in debate, he is never loud or boisterous, but utters the most biting sarcasms in a manner the most irritatingly cool, and a voice that resembles the music of the spheres. Such is the admirable clearness of his voice, and the perfection of his enunciation, that the lowest tones circulate like echoes through the hall of congress, and are far more distinct than the roarings of M—— L——, the bellowings of R—— N——, or the bleatings of the very stentorian R—— R——. In short, in all the requisites of a great orator, he has no superior, and, in the greatest of all, the power of attracting, charming, riveting the attention of an audience, no equal in this country, perhaps in the world.

Mr. Randolph has fared, as most political leaders have done, in having his conduct misrepresented, his foibles, which Heaven knows are sufficiently formidable, exaggerated, and his peculiarities caricatured, without remorse. The fault is in a great measure his own. He spares no adversary, and has no right to expect they will spare him. In this respect his example may well be a warning, to inculcate among rival leaders the necessity of toleration in politics as well as religion. That he is irritable, capricious, and careless of wounding the feelings of those for whom

he has no particular regard, no one will deny. That he is impatient in argument, and intolerant of opposition, is equally certain; and the whole world knows, that he is little solicitous to disguise his contempt or dislike. But much of this peevish irritability may find its origin and excuse in his physical sufferings. Almost from his boyhood he has never known the blessing of health, nor ever enjoyed even its anticipation. His constitution is irretrievably broken down; and though he may live many years, they will, in all probability, be years of anxiety and suffering, embittered not only by the absence of all hope, but by the ridicule, instead of the sympathy of the world, which is ever too apt to suppose that a man cannot be sick without dying. Men lingering under the slow consuming decay of a constitutional infirmity, and perishing, not by inches, but the hundredth part of an inch, seem to me the most pitiable of the human race. The world, and even their nearest friends, come at last to believe their malady imaginary, their complaints without cause. They grow tired of hearing a man always proclaiming himself a victim to disease, yet at the same time appearing to take his share in the business, as well as the enjoyments of life, and living on like the rest of his fellow-worms. "They jest at scars that never felt a wound," and the very circumstance that should excite additional commiseration, too often gives occasion to cold neglect or flippant ridicule.

In this painful and trying situation was Mr. Randolph when I saw him, and it seems to me, that

some apology at least, for his selfish disregard to the feelings of others, might be found in the harassing nature of his own. I know of no situation more aptly calculated to make a man a misanthrope; and those who are foremost and loudest in their condemnation, would do well to look into their own hearts, put themselves in his place, and then ask whether it does not naturally lead to, though it may not justify, occasional irritation, if not habitual ill-temper. I here speak of him as the world generally does. But so far as I saw him, and this was at all hours, he was full of benignity and kindness. His treatment of his servants, and especially of his own slaves, was that of the kindest master, and he always called his personal attendant "Johnny," which diminutive, to my mind, strongly indicated an habitual good-will towards them. It is thus we designate our familiar friends, and the children of our affections. To me, from whose admiration or applause he could anticipate neither honour or advantage, his behaviour was uniformly kind, almost affectionate, and it will be long before I forget his melancholy, yet conciliatory smile, the music of his mellow voice, or the magic of his gentle manners.

We passed our evenings together for some weeks, or rather I may say the better part of our nights, for he loved to sit up late, because as he was wont to say, the grave, not the bed, was *his* place of rest. On these occasions there was a charm in his conversation, I never found in that of any other person. Old Virginia was the goddess of his idolatry, and of

her he delighted to talk. He loved her so dearly, that he sometimes almost forgot he was also a citizen of the United States. The glories and triumphs of Patrick Henry's eloquence, and the ancient hospitality of the old patricians on James river, were also among his favourite topics, of which he never tired, and with which he never tired me. In short, Frank, the impression on my mind is indelible, never to be eradicated, that his heart was naturally liberal, open, and kind, and that his occasional ebullitions of splanetic impatience, were the spontaneous, perhaps irrepressible, efforts of a debilitated frame, to relieve itself a moment from the eternal impression of its own unceasing worryings.

Mr. Randolph is, beyond comparison, the most singular and striking person I have ever seen. He seems made up of contradictions. Though his person is exceedingly tall, thin, and ill-proportioned, he is the most graceful man in the world when he pleases; and with an almost feminine voice, his whispers are heard across a room. When seated on the opposite side of the hall of congress, he looks like a boy of fifteen; but when he rises to speak, he seems to stretch and expand his figure almost into sublimity, from the contrast between his height when sitting or standing. In the former, his shoulders are raised, his head depressed, his body sunk almost into invisibility; in the latter he is seen, his figure dilated, in the attitude of inspiration, his head raised, his long white finger pointing, and his dark Indian eye flashing lightning at the object of his overwhelming sarcasm.

I regret to add, that this extraordinary man will, in all probability, survive but a few years. His health appears irretrievably gone, and his constitution irreparably injured. A premature decay seems gradually creeping, almost imperceptibly, over all his vital powers, and an irresistible unseen influence, that baffles human skill and human means, appears to be dragging him like an inexorable creditor to the grave. At the age of thirty-one or two, with wealth in possession, fame as his handmaid, and glory and power in bright perspective, he is in constitution an infirm old man, with his light glossy hair parted over his forehead, and tied with a black riband behind; teeth white as ivory, eyes flashing with intellect, and a countenance seamed with innumerable wrinkles. At the distance of a hundred yards, he will be mistaken for an overgrown, premature boy; approach him, and at every step his appearance changes, and he becomes gradually metamorphosed into a decrepit old man. You will then see a face such as you never saw before, never will see again; if he likes you, a smile such as you never beheld light up a face before; and when that passes away, a countenance bearing an expression of long anxiety and suffering, that will make your heart ache if it never ached before.

Such is John Randolph, the descendant of Pocahontas, as he appeared to me. He may be wayward, eccentric, self-willed, and erratic. His opponents sometimes insinuate that he is mad, because he sees what they cannot see, and speaks in the spirit of

inspiration of things to come. He looks into the clear mirror of futurity, with an eye that never winks, and they think he is staring at some phantom of his own creation. He talks of things past their comprehension, and they pronounce him mad.

Abdallah was held one of the most eloquent of all the mollahs among the faithful, and his orations were listened to by the wise, as the words of inspiration. He usually rode an ass, considered the most conceited of all the long-eared tribe, and was accustomed to con his speeches as he travelled along the highway. One day after one of these rehearsals, the ass chanced, while browsing in a wood, to meet a fox, who asked him, "What news?" "Alas!" cried the ass, "my poor master is run mad!" "How so," replied the other. "Why he talks so that I can't understand a word he says." "Oh, if that is all," quoth Reynard, "make yourself perfectly easy—every man is not mad who talks beyond the comprehension of an ass."

Mr. Randolph is a great admirer of horses, though he has left off racing, and is always followed by one or two dogs, who, he says, are the only true friends he ever had. If so, this is his own fault; no man ever was without friends who took the proper means to gain them. He would not suffer any one, not even his servants, to feed his dogs; as he told me for the reason, that they were apt to divide their affections between their feeders. He would have his dogs love none other, depend on none other but himself; this shows that his character had become selfish. He

boasted of being the best compounder of *mint-juleps* of any man in Virginia. • He put no water in them, and a single wine-glass sufficed for a long evening. He smoked most inveterately, and so do I you know, Frank, and this was a bond of union between us. I have known two men become staunch friends, only by taking snuff out of each other's boxes a few times. We kept most unseemly hours, and sometimes in the morning he would get up from his chair, look at his watch, and exclaim—"Bless me! I don't know whose fault it is, but I used to keep good hours before you came." At parting he gave me a characteristic invitation to come and see him. "You shall have horse to ride and weapon to wear; bacon and greens, Virginia fare, and help me make hay in the finest meadow in the world." I should like to see the lion in his den, and have some thoughts of venturing, if it is not too far out of my way. They say he is very hospitable to those he likes, but not exactly so to those he don't. "Mr. Randolph," said one of the latter class to him one day—"I passed your house, last week." "You'r welcome to pass it, sir," replied the other very significantly.

Mr. Randolph paid no attention to the etiquette established at Washington, or, rather attempted to be established, for there were great difficulties in the way of settling the point of precedence among our wild republicans. At the time I was there, every thing was at sixes and sevens. A distinction was attempted between the members of the senate and those of the house of representatives. The foreign

ministers paid the first visit to the former, but insisted on a similar compliment from the latter. In like manner the wives of the heads of departments made the first move towards those of the senators, while they waited the first call from those of the members of the house of representatives. The reason of this distinction was, that a senator represented a state, and a member only a portion of a state. You may laugh, if you please, about these apparently insignificant matters, but I can assure you, I had it from undoubted authority, that a very promising negotiation was not long since knocked on the head, by a contest for precedence between the wives of a secretary of state and a foreign minister. It is impossible to conceive the frivolous anxieties of people in certain situations, to take precedence of each other. The next thing to being a great man, is being next to a great man.

Mr. Randolph demurred to the distinction attempted between a senator and a member of congress; he argued that the house of representatives was the nearest branch of the government to the sovereign people, and therefore superior in dignity to the others. It was also his opinion, that as the foreign ministers were in fact residents at Washington, and the members of congress strangers, the established rule in general society made it proper for the former to make the first advances. He did not choose, he said, to go and ask a dinner from any man, by paying the first visit. If he meant to give him one it was a different affair. He therefore did not visit the diplo-

matique corps, and etiquette forbade they should visit him. The foreign ministers were, however, anxious to have him, and after ascertaining that he would accept an invitation to dinner, without the formality of a visit, accordingly sent him one. He did accept promptly, and immediately invited the ministers to dine with him, at a day previous to that in which he was engaged to them. They could not decline, and accordingly came. Randolph chuckled mightily at securing the first visit, and thus supporting his dignity as representative of the sovereign people.

Bolling Robertson,\* his cousin, and equally a descendant of Pocahontas, was also a member of congress at the same time. I knew him well; he was a man of fine talents, and inflexible integrity, both in private and public life. He had the Indian eye, and the whole cast of his countenance was aboriginal; his temper was quick, but his heart kind and excellent. He was a faithful friend, but a most determined enemy. In a debate in the house, he and Randolph launched so many Indian arrows at each other, that a challenge took place. But the dispute was happily adjusted, and they continued friends afterwards. There are many other descendants of the princess, in Virginia, and certainly if I were to choose a pedigree for myself, I would prefer this to a descent from any one of William the Conqueror's barons, or William the Conqueror himself.

Though I dislike copying any thing, and had rather

\* This gentleman became, afterwards, governor of Louisiana, and died there.

write out of my own head, as the saying is, a great deal, yet I cannot just now refrain from transcribing the following curious directions for the outfit of such "as shall have cause to provide to go to Virginia, whereby greate numbers may in parte conceive the better how to provide for themselves." It is worth all the vague talk in the world about the state of the times, and the simplicity of living among the first adventurers.

	<i>s. d.</i>
A Monmouth cap, . . . . .	1 10
3 falling bands, . . . . .	1 3
3 shirts, . . . . .	7 6
1 waste coat, . . . . .	2 2
1 suit of canvas, . . . . .	7 6
1 suit of frize, . . . . .	10 0
1 suit of cloth, . . . . .	15 0
3 paire of Irish stockings, . . . . .	4 0
4 paire of shoes, . . . . .	8 8
1 paire of garters, . . . . .	0 10
1 dozen points, . . . . .	0 3
1 paire of canvas sheets, . . . . .	8 0
7 ells of canvas, to make a bed, to be filled in Virginia, serving for two men, . . . . .	8 0
5 ells of coarse canvas, to make a bed at sea for two men, . . . . .	5 0
A coarse rug at sea, for two men, . . . . .	6 0
	<hr style="width: 10%; margin-left: auto; margin-right: 0;"/> £4 6 0

What would one of our spruce supercargoes say to such an outfit for a new world, I wonder, Frank? The whole of the indispensable necessaries for a family emigrating to Virginia, clothes, victuals, arms, tools, furniture, &c. is estimated by the writer at twenty pounds!

Thus have I fairly settled Virginia, and as fairly settled you down in it with my own hand. I will bring its history down to the present time in as few words as possible. Like other states it grew, and spread, and flourished, and increased in population by the good old way, only a good deal faster than they before did these things ; the women, as will be found by experience, always accommodating themselves to the exigencies of a new country. In a little while the stately thatched castles of Jamestown became crowded with little white-headed urchins, that grew by rolling and sunning themselves in the sand,—and when they got to be men, the hive swarmed, and the young bees went forth, made a new hive, which swarmed again,—until in process of time the land was peopled, and became a goodly state. Neither Neptune, nor Jupiter, nor Minerva, took them especially under their protection : nor did Medea assist them in overcoming the obstacles in their way by any of the arts of magic. Fortitude, valour, perseverance, industry, and little Pocahontas, were their tutelary deities ; and their golden fleece, fields of corn, and plantations of tobacco. Good by.

## LETTER III.

DEAR FRANK,

THE first settlers of Virginia generally located larger tracts than those to the north, because they saw more clearly its prospective value, or that the early introduction of slaves enabled them to cultivate more extensively. Hence arose the distinction subsisting between the two parts of the Union—the one being occupied by farmers, cultivating farms, the other by planters, cultivating plantations. To this day, the land in the occupancy of individuals lies mostly in large tracts, some of them containing several thousand acres. In one of my late excursions previous to setting out on my *grand tour*, I spent several days at the seat of one of these planters; who, by the way, was a lady, and such a one as you will not see every day, Frank. In the place of general description, which is for the most part vague and unsatisfactory, take the following picture; which, however, is a favourable one, as the establishment was one of the most liberal and hospitable of any in Virginia.

The master of the house, at least the gentleman who officiated as such, was a son-in-law of the family, who dressed exceedingly plain, and who, I soon found, was a well-educated, lively, good-humoured, sensible man; though if I were to tell you, and you to

tell your good lady-aunt Kate, that he never drank any thing but water, she would no more believe it, than she believes in the story of parson P——'s amorous propensities. A stranger here, is just as much at home as a child in its cradle. Indeed I have heard a story of a gentleman from our part of the world, who stopt here, *en passant*, with his wife, carriage, and servants; forgot in a little time that he was not at home, and staid more than half a year! Nay, so far did this delusion extend, that the lady visiter forgot herself so completely, as to find fault with the visits of the neighbouring country squires to the hospitable mansion, and to refuse to sit at table with them! In short, I am credibly informed, she quarrelled with a most respectable old silver family teapot, which still keeps its stand on the breakfast table, and out of which I used to drink tea with infinite satisfaction,—because it was not gold, such as they used at her father's (!)

A day's residence here convinces you that you occasion no restraint; consequently that you are welcome; and therefore you feel all the freedom of home. Whenever I see the servants running about—the house in the hurry of preparation, and the furniture turned topsy-turvy on my arrival, I make my visit very short; because I know by my own experience, that people never like what gives them trouble, and however they be inclined to a hearty welcome, must inevitably be glad of my departure. Here the ladies attend, as usual, to their own amusements and employments. You are told the carriage or horses are at your service—that you can fish, or hunt, or

lounge, or read, just as you please ; and every one makes his choice.

The plantation is large ; containing, I believe, between nine and ten thousand acres ; and several hundred negroes are attached to it. Some of the females are employed in taking care of the children, or in household occupations ; others in the fields ; while the old ones enjoy a sort of *otium cum dignitate*, at their quarters. These quarters consist of log cabins, disposed in two rows on either side a wide avenue, with each a little garden, in which they raise vegetables. Whitewashed and clean, they exhibited an appearance of comfort, which, in some measure, served to reconcile me to bondage. At the door of one of these, as we walked this way one evening, stood a little old negro, with his body bent in a curve, and his head as white as snow, leaning on what an Irishman would call a shillalah. He was the patriarch of the tribe ; and enjoyed in his old age a life of perfect ease. You might hear him laugh half a mile ; and he seemed to possess a full portion of that unreflecting gayety, which, happily for his race, so generally falls to their portion, and perhaps makes them some amends for the loss of freedom. Relying on their master for the supply of all their wants, they are in a sort of state of childhood,—equally exempt with children, from all the cares of providing support and subsistence for their offspring. This old man is of an unknown age ; his birth being beyond history or tradition ; and having once been in the service of Lord Dunmore, he looks down with a dignified

contempt on the plebeian slaves around him. The greatest aristocrat in the world, is one of these fellows who has belonged to a great man,—I mean with the exception of his master.

The harvest commenced while I was here ; and you would have been astonished, to see what work they made with a field of wheat, containing, I was told, upwards of five hundred acres. All hands turned out ; and by night it was all in shocks. An army of locusts could not have swept it away half so soon, had it been green. I happened to be riding through the fields at twelve o'clock, and saw the women coming out singing, gallantly bonneted with large trays, containing ham and corn-bread,—a food they prefer to all other. It was gratifying to see them enjoying this wholesome dinner ; for since their lot seems almost beyond remedy, it was consoling to find it mitigated by kindness and plenty. I hope, and trust, that this practice is general ; for though the present generation cannot be charged with this system of slavery, they owe it to humanity—to the reputation of their country—they stand charged with an awful accountability to him who created this difference in complexion, to mitigate its evils as far as possible.

We, in our part of the world, are accustomed to stigmatize Virginia and the more southern states, with the imputed guilt of the system of slavery which yet subsists among them,—although records are still extant which show that it was entailed upon their ancestors by the British government ; which encour-

aged the importation of slaves into these colonies, in spite of the repeated remonstrances of the colonial legislatures. The present generation found them on its hands,—and the great majority of planters with whom I conversed, lament an evil which cannot be cured by immediate emancipation—which seems almost to baffle the hopes of futurity—and which, while it appears as a stain on the lustre of their freedom, seems almost beyond the reach of a remedy. The country west of the mountains has few slaves: and if I ever get there, I shall attempt, perhaps, to sketch the difference of character and habits originating in that circumstance.

I left this most respectable and hospitable mansion, after staying about a week; at the end of which I began to be able to account for the delusion of the gentleman and lady I told you about in the first part of this letter. I began to feel myself mightily at home; and, as the Virginians say, felt a *heap* of regret at bidding the excellent lady and her family good by. She had two little daughters not grown up, who are receiving that sort of domestic education at home, which is very common in Virginia. They perhaps will not dance better than becomes a modest woman, as some ladies do—nor run their fingers so fast over a piano—nor wear such short petticoats as our town-bred misses; but they will probably make amends for these deficiencies, by the chaste simplicity of their manners—the superior cultivation of their minds, and the unadulterated purity of their hearts. They will, to sum up all in

one word, make better wives for it, Frank,—the only character in which a really valuable woman can ever shine. The oldest was a fair blue-eyed lassie, who, I prophesy, will one day be the belle of Virginia.

The turn which my letter has unaccountably taken, brings to my mind, what I had like to have forgot,—a manuscript work, which afforded me infinite satisfaction. I used to lay on the sofa in the stately hall, during the sultry part of the day, and read it with wonderful gusto. It was written by an ancestor of the lady with whom I was a guest,—a high man in his day. Strangers, as they sail up James river, are still shown the house, where he once lived in princely splendour; giving welcome and shelter to high and low that passed that way. Judging by the work, the author was a deep scholar; a man of great observation, and a sly joker on womankind. He never misses an opportunity of giving a shrewd cut at them; and as I especially recollect, records with great satisfaction, the theological opinions of one Bearskin, an Indian philosopher, who accompanied him in running the line between Virginia and North Carolina.

Bearskin's paradise was an improvement on that of Mahomet. It was peopled with beautiful maids, gifted with every personal charm, and endowed with every intellectual gift; of which last they made the most excellent use—by never speaking a word. In addition to this, they were extremely docile and good-natured; obeying every wish or command, of course, without the least grumbling. The sage

Bearskin's place of punishment, was a terrible place; containing nothing but ugly old women, who—but let us not insult the memory of our mothers and grandmothers, who some of them doubtless were not beauties, if I may judge by the family pictures. The style of this work is, I think, the finest specimen of that grave, stately, and quaint mode of writing fashionable about a century ago, that I have ever met with any where. Good by.

## LETTER IV.

DEAR FRANK,

ONE of the first things that strikes a northern man, who flounders into Virginia, or either of the more southern states, loaded with a pack of prejudices as large as a pedler's is, that he has, all life long, been under a very mistaken notion of the state of their manners. So, at least, it fared with me, who, you know, had a singular antipathy to gouging, and mint-juleps, the latter of which I have, however, pretty nearly got over. Before I had been long in this part of the world, I discovered, to my great surprise, that the people were very much like other folks, only a little more hospitable; and it is now my settled opinion, notwithstanding all counter authorities, that a civil, honest, well-meaning man, like myself, may traverse the southern states, mountains and all, without being either obliged to fight, without special reason, or put up with insults from any body. Every day's experience, in short, convinces me, that the people of our part of the world have been much misled by the idle tales of travelling pedlers, sent out to buy tobacco and cotton, or by the unneighbourly arts of men, knowing better, but misrepresenting for party purposes.

“Ould Virginia,” which, according to the proverb,

“never tires,” has come in for a full share of this ignorant or interested obloquy; for it seems that her sister states have never been brought to forgive her, for not only producing a Washington, but, with an indecorous kind of prodigality, furnishing three or four other presidents in succession. This has scandalized the other states desperately; for each one, as a matter of course, thinks itself entitled to give a president in time, even though it may have so happened that it never produced a man whose talents and opportunities qualified him for that high station. However I may lament this misfortune of poor Virginia, I don't think she is so very much to blame for producing a succession of such distinguished men, and hold, that we of the north are, in duty bound, to forgive her, provided she promise never to do so again. But, whether she does or not, I will confess to you, that such is my want of the true local *amor patria*, that, provided we get good presidents, I care not what state they come from; since, somehow or other, I have taken up an odd notion, that whether a man be born east, west, north, or south, provided he is born within the limits of our country, he is still an American; and, that the attempt to put in claims to the presidency distinct from merit and talents, originated in the petty ambition of grovelling politicians, who could never expect to gain distinction, except by pampering the vanity of their constituents at home.

Be this as it may, I think it is much to be wished, that the people of the various divisions of the United States were a little more acquainted with each other,

for, I am satisfied, they would be the better friends for it. At present, like the tenants of one of those amazing high houses in Edinburgh, that accommodate several families, though living, as it were, under the same roof, they have scarcely a speaking acquaintance. The impressions, which they long since took upon trust, with respect to each other, from ignorant or ill-natured travellers, interested in deceiving or sporting with their credulity; the stories of horseracing, drinking, and gouging, on one hand, and of tricking and witch-burning on the other, that have passed current for a century or more, are still received as pictures of existing manners, though even, at any time, they were of rare occurrence, and very many of these practices are altogether extinct. The changes which succeed each other, in this chameleon country, more rapidly than in any other part of the world, have, it would seem, passed unmarked and unrecorded, while the good people still continue to believe and tremble. The impressions of the natives here, with respect to those of the eastward, are still tinged with the remembrance of witch-burnings; and not a pious dame in our northern parts, that would not compound for her son coming back with one eye left, from an excursion into the back parts of the southern states.

Such foolish prejudices are worthy of honest John Bull, who, from time immemorial, has believed that his neighbours, the French, eat frogs, and are destitute of religion, as well as of every manly and womanly virtue. But our people, who all read, and write, and

think, and reason—some right—others wrong, ought to be ashamed of themselves, to believe so badly of their countrymen and neighbours. It is a foolish absurdity, ever the product of national folly, or national antipathy, to assert, that cotemporary and neighbouring people, having the same lights of religion, living under similar laws, and enjoying, equally, the advantages of education, should be so essentially different in morals. They may differ, it is true, in manners; but there is no philosophical reason for their exhibiting a contrast of morals, or that one should be so much wiser and better than the other. I believe, if we place them fairly in comparison, with no interest to allure us astray, and no antipathies to tempt us from the truth, we shall find, that an inferiority in one point will be met by a superiority in another; that, though they may differ in various respects, there is no general disparity; and that, on the whole, the scale remains equally balanced. There are two distinct classes of faults in the world; one open, palpable, and offensive; the other secret, sly, and hypocritical. Those who commit the former, are worse than they seem; and those who indulge in the latter, are not half so good as they appear. The former are offenders against decency and the laws of man; the latter against virtue and the Divinity.

But I know you hate prosing, and not without good reason, since I remember you had a surfeit of it, when by way of growing wise, you accompanied

our friend, Dr. —, on a scientific tour to the seven-milestone. This worthy scholar never had an original idea but once in his life, when I recollect he was delivered of a swinging absurdity. I shall never forget the time, when he drew a conclusive argument in favour of the immortality of the soul, from his capacity of deriving such wonderful pleasure in the contemplation of a flower through a little magnifying glass. But it is time for us to get on in our travels.

I commenced my regular tour at N—, where I was lucky enough to fall in with our old fellow-student, Oliver B—, who, you may remember, was expelled the college, for taking such unwarrantable freedoms with the venerable classics, which he always translated to suit his own purposes. This habit gave mortal offence to the professor of humanity; for it not only made the class laugh, but, what was far worse, caused the professor sometimes to forget his gravity. But the grand offence was against the professor of theology, and theologians, you know, never forgive. One cold morning, when, as usual, we were called up at daylight, to prayers, I suppose to make us in love with praying all our lives, by connecting it with such agreeable associations, somebody, in coming into the cold chapel, exclaimed, "*O tempora;*" Oliver, stretching himself out with a most significant yawn, replied, "*O mores,*" drawling it out, to make it sound like *more ease*. This occasioned a mighty tittering, which, being

traced to Noll, he was had up before the faculty, and, like poor Cinna, the poet, who was killed by Marc Antony's mob, for making bad verses, was expelled for marring good Latin.

While at college, he was considered the best Greek and Latin scholar of the class; and, for Latin puns, no man in Philadelphia could come up to him. But his hobby, at present, is geology, the fashionable science of the day. Last year he was hard at chymistry, and Sir Humphrey Davy was his hero. But he grew tired of this improving science, which he declared was always playing him tricks; for, by the time he had fairly got to understand one theory, another came, and as fairly knocked it on the head; so that he was not only compelled to begin to learn, but to unlearn anew. Monsieur Cuvier is now his oracle, but shares his attentions with Werner and Hutton, the present fashionable manufacturers of worlds. *Noll* has made three worlds already, though we have only travelled three days; and I begin to find this so easy a matter, that I think of trying my hand at it myself soon. Such trifles are nothing to the philosophers, who create worlds as easy as boys blow soap-bubbles.

Our old acquaintance having an idle summer on his hands, for he has not yet chosen his profession, agreed to accompany me, and we accordingly set forth on horseback, carrying our *plunder* (as the Virginians call baggage) in a light Jersey wagon. The good women along the road take us for travel-

ling pedlers, and come out continually to bargain for pins, needles, handkerchiefs, and such like matters.

It is very rare here to see gentlemen travellers carry their plunder except in a small portmanteau fixed to the saddle ; as it is not customary to dress fine at the Springs, or elsewhere : those who do, are apt to be taken for blacklegs, or horse-jockeys. Good by.

## LETTER V.

DEAR FRANK,

ENTERING "Ould Virginia," from the Chesapeake bay, you travel upon what is called by the learned in these matters, the region of *sea sand*. But, by the way, I ought to tell you, I caught a fresh-water fish in the bay; whence I conclude, to a certainty, it was once a great fresh-water lake, where the waters of the rivers, gradually accumulating, at last broke through, between capes Charles and Henry, with an intention of making a violent inroad upon the ocean. But they reckoned without their host; for the sea fairly turned the tables upon them, and, in revenge, changed all the great lake salt, making a pretty kettle of fish of it. In this you see the wonderful equality, or, to use a diplomatic phrase, "reciprocity," in the operations of nature, who having, according to the testimony of a learned philosopher, metamorphosed the waters of the great lakes from salt into fresh, did, like an honest lady, make the salt waters amends for this liberty, by turning the fresh waters into salt in another quarter.

The region of sea sand is, according to the present fashionable theory, an accession from the sea, which, in this way, seems to acknowledge a sort of fealty to mother earth, by paying her a yearly tribute of

fine white sand, beautiful shells, and pretty round polished pebbles; which, I dare say, please the old lady wonderfully. In process of time this mixture becomes, by the aid of vegetable decomposition, a fine rich soil, level, and without a single rock, or even stone as large as an egg. It was on these flats that the early adventurers made their first effectual settlement, from whence they gradually penetrated into the region of *river alluvion*, of which I shall speak anon. Along the rivers, winding through these extensive plains, lived, not more than an age ago, a race of stately planters, whose hospitality gave a character to Virginia, which it still retains. Strangers were always welcome, and soon forgot they were strangers. But time, the exhaustion of the soil, by a careless mode of cultivation, together with the division of property, brought about by the salutary operation of the statute abolishing entails, which is the true foundation of our republican system, all combined, have changed the face of things. A few of these ancient establishments are still kept up, but many of the houses are shut; others have passed into the hands of the industrious, or the speculating, whose modes of thinking, feeling, and acting, are totally different; and, with here and there an exception, nothing now remains, but the traditionary details of some aged matron, who lives only in the recollections of the past, of ancient modes, and ancient hospitality. Trade and industry are good things; but they are not without that alloy of evil which seems to incorporate itself with every mode and

habit of life. Those who get money with difficulty, part from it with difficulty ; and, although they may add to their own enjoyments, and to the wealth of a country, seldom, I believe, are either very disinterestedly hospitable or generous. They certainly rarely partake, in any great degree, of those lofty feelings, which set one man high above another in the scale of being, and which are so frequently found among those who are neither very industrious nor very saving. The more, and the nearer I look at human life, the more I am satisfied of this great truth—that the only perfect system of equality is to be found in the distributions of Providence ; that there is nearly the same proportion of good and evil in all classes of society, except one, as well as the same proportion of enjoyment ; and that mankind are happy, not according to the wealth they enjoy, but to the virtues they practise. Great enjoyments are coupled with great sufferings—the capacity for exquisite happiness is ever the accompaniment of a great susceptibility to misery—great faults and great virtues belong to the same family ;—so do small virtues, and little vices ; and although one man may suffer for a great crime, while another, guilty of a multiplicity of small ones, escapes, still it may reasonably be questioned whether the sum total of the one does not amount to the single enormity of the other. And now let us get on in our travels,—and I hope you are not impatient ; for a man can't always be on horseback ; he must stop to bait himself and his horse. In like manner I cannot always be telling you of what I see ; for what

I see here, belongs to other people ; what I think and feel is my own, and therefore I am fond of showing it, as a mother is of exhibiting her child, even though it is not worth looking at ; which is very often the case with my thoughts.

The transition from the region of *sea sand*, to that of *river alluvion* is very abrupt ; it is only climbing a hill, and you pop on the latter, which is a deposit of the rivers, in like manner as the former is of the ocean. The rivers, not to be behindhand with the sea, bring down a tribute to the earth. But the sly rogues play the old lady a trick similar to that of the man who stole his neighbour's purse to pay a debt he owed him. They only pay in the low lands what they filch from her in the mountains, which is what they call "robbing Peter to pay Paul." If it was not for this nefarious swindling, the earth would probably grow so large in time, as to destroy the whole system of the universe by increasing in attraction as in size, until all the planets would come shooting towards her, and break their own heads, as well as the old lady's. But let the modern makers of Heaven and earth, who scandalize the honest rivers in this way, look to it ;—all I can say is, it is well for these gentry that there are no watery gods now-a-days, except Daddy Neptune, who has enough to do to defend the rights of the ocean, to take their part. You remember what a scrape one of Homer's heroes got into by insulting the Scamander, which fell into such a passion that it fried itself dry in its own channel, insomuch that none of the learned, except M.

Chevalier, have been able to find it since. For this reason honest Dan Homer is shrewdly suspected of having made that river pretty much as the great giant Gargantera did the little river Bievre, when he gave the people of Paris a benediction from the top of a high steeple. The learned, indeed, are as great doubters as Governor Van Twiller. One sect of philosophers doubted their own existence, until a cunning rogue demonstrated it by a two-legged syllogism, to wit, "I think, therefore I exist," which he put in Latin, for fear the vulgar should laugh at him, and ask what stronger proof he could give of his thinking, than of his existing. Another very great philosopher swore that every thing was ideal in this world, until he ran against a post, and was asked by a wag if there was any *matter* in it. And now they begin to doubt that there ever was such a city, or such a war, as that of Troy, because they can't find the Scamander and Simois, in the relative situations described by Homer, while at the same time they palm upon us the theory of sea sands, and river alluvion, under the operation of which the earth is undergoing perpetual changes. But the honest truth of the matter I believe is, that every avenue to rational originality is so completely choked up by preceding writers, that there is now no way of being original except by being absurd. It may serve to humble the pride of these laborious triflers, to reflect that the most useful discoveries have been made in the most barbarous times, and that the principal employment of modern philosophers, is to debate on things that were

invented by ignorant people. Columbus discovered America when the art of building ships might be said to be in its infancy, and all the inventions of the moderns put together are nothing, in point of universal utility, to those of producing fire, making iron, and turning wheat into flour. The single invention of the plough, is worth all the theories of Newton, added to all the discoveries of Sir Humphrey Davy. Yet these were all the product of what are called the ages of ignorance. It would seem, indeed, that with philosophy, science, and the arts, there is a certain point beyond which all researches serve no other purpose, than merely to afford amusement to persons who are without any useful occupation. They are for the most part productive of nothing but useless truths, which neither enlarge the sphere of knowledge, nor contribute in any way to the happiness of mankind. Oh, for another Calif Omar, or Bully Cockburn, to burn all the libraries, that we poor moderns might deal in something else besides original absurdities, or servile imitations!

The contrast between the country I passed through in going up to Richmond, and that between it and the south mountain, to whatever cause it may be owing, is sufficiently marked to give rise to a distinction among geologists. It is here that all the rivers are broken by falls; for it seems they have no other way of getting downhill, but by falling. The separation of these two regions is everywhere marked by an interruption in the navigation, except in the solitary instance of the great Mohegan, vul-

garly called Hudson, which bears its waters triumphantly through Bull Hill, Crow's Nest, Dunderbarrack, and Anthony's Nose, with a current deep, clear, and unagitated, as if it had not cost him a single effort. Yet have the people of this part of the world the unparalleled assurance to compare James river and the Potomac, to the great Mohegan, which is the very Hannibal of rivers, inasmuch as it breaks through mountains without making a single false step by the way. Other rivers, to wit, James and the Potomac, are obliged to tumble downhill as well as they can; and it is no doubt owing to the anticipation of this unpleasant job that they are so much given to murmuring. Now it is a singular fact, that neither the great Mohegan, nor any body living on its banks, was ever known to murmur, except just about the time of electing a new president from Old Virginia.

I am now at Richmond, the seat of government, pro tem. of the state. It will probably not remain so long, as they are making a stir west of the Blue Ridge; and it seems the destiny of this country, that power should travel to the west, as that was the way it first came here. A convention has been called together to consider this and other matters of mortal grievance, under which the good people have been persuaded they have long laboured, without knowing any thing about them, as often happens. The result of this struggle between the two sections of the country, will probably be the division of the state into two great parties, distinct from federalism

and anti-federalism, which will in a great degree destroy its political weight in the general government. Such has been the case with the state of New-York, where the rivalry of ambitious individuals has from time to time so distracted the people, that no one could depend upon its political consistency, or its support of any cause or system whatever, for four-and-twenty hours together. This changing without any apparent cause, however, it cannot be denied, is a proof of her independence, as well as of a determination to do as she pleases. So long as she perseveres in this vacillating course, it is not to be expected that she will attain to her proper influence in the union, which is only to be acquired by a uniform devotion to the same political principles.—Instead of marshalling under the banner of principles, we find them slavishly devoting themselves to *men*, and submitting to be called Burrrites, Lewisites, or Clintonians, like the abject followers of some feudal chief. Perhaps they don't know it; but the republicans of the other states look on, and despise such a rabble of retainers, and lose all confidence in a state thus in leading-strings.

The city of Richmond deserves to have a song written about it, as well as Richmond Hill, where lived a lass, in England; and were I a poet, it should not be without it twenty-four hours. It is beautifully situated, just on the line of division between the region of sea sand, and of river alluvion, and at the foot of James river rapids. Above, the river foams and roars among the rocks; below, it winds gently

and quietly through a sweet landscape of meadows, and golden harvest-fields. It was once, and until lately, inhabited principally by a race of most ancient and respectable planters, having estates in the country, who chose it for their residence for the sake of social enjoyment. They formed a society, which, I am sorry to say, is now seldom to be met with in any of our cities: I mean, a society of people, not exclusively monopolized by money-making pursuits, but of liberal education, liberal habits of thinking and acting, and possessing both leisure and inclination to cultivate those feelings, and pursue those objects, which exalt our nature, rather than increase our fortune. I am, however, one of those who, like honest *Candide*, think all things happen for the best, and that this is the best of all possible worlds. I therefore don't actually quarrel with the money-getting spirit that pervades all our great cities, to the utter exclusion of the encouragement of literature, except so far as it is necessary to pen an advertisement. It makes men rich, if not liberal and enlightened: and in places where wealth is synonymous with virtue and intellect, it may, for aught I know, answer in lieu of both. I shall never forget how the good alderman, your father, dropped his knife and fork, one day, when I asserted at his table, that — the great merchant, who was actually president of a bank, and had the credit of being worth millions, was, in feeling, intellect, and action, no better than a pedler. The alderman looked at me as if I had abused General Washington or the Bible; and I have

never sat at the good man's table since. But without exactly quarrelling with that sordid disposition, or that ostentatious, yet vulgar profusion, which in general actuates the people of our great cities, to the exclusion of every nobler pursuit, and all rational economy; still I may venture to lament its universality. In days of yore, Plutus, although he shone in gold and precious stones, hid himself in the bowels of the earth; but now he is seen clothed in ragged bank-notes, taking precedence everywhere in the city drawing-rooms. There is now no place where a knot of harmless people of moderate fortune can sit down in the undisturbed enjoyment of social ease, or the cultivation of literature and science, free from the intrusion of tobacco, tar, pitch, potash, and cod-fish; sandahs, baftas, buglipoops, and all the jargon of East India commodities. If they have a moderate competency, they are beset by greedy beggars, who, by dint of perseverance, at length tempt them to engage in some profitable speculation, which draws them gradually from their former pursuits, and ingulphs them for ever in the vortex of gain.

In fact, no young man, now-a-days, at least in our commercial places, thinks of sitting down quietly in the enjoyment of wealth, and the cultivation of those elegant pursuits which adorn our nature, and exalt a country. Sometimes, indeed, he becomes what is called a gentleman, that is to say, he abandons every useful or honourable pursuit, and either lounges away a contemptible existence in doing nothing, or in doing what he ought not to have done. But the most

common fate of young men, in our part of the world, who inherit great fortunes is, to set about making them greater. They seem never to think of the dignity of that lofty independence, which is the lot of the young man of wealth who retires to the enjoyment of what has been left him by his fathers. They seem to imagine there is no alternative between absolute idleness, and absolute devotion to business: nor do they appear to recollect, that the noblest employment of wealth is, to do good with it, and employ the leisure it bestows in the pursuit of knowledge, rather than the accumulation of superfluous gold, which they will not bestow on others, and know not how to enjoy themselves.

These sentiments are exemplified in the case of our two school-fellows, H—— and D——, both of whom, at about the age of three-and-twenty, inherited fortunes that would have been ample in any part of the world, and were well-educated. H——, who was always turning a penny at school, and cried his eyes out once at losing a sixpence through a crack in the floor of the school, on receiving his fortune began to look out for bargains; and put himself under the tuition of one of the most experienced *shavers* of the city, to learn the arts of the trade. In this way he grew richer and richer; and meaner and meaner. If he gave a great dinner, from pure ostentation, he starved his household, while he was eating the dinners given him in turn. He kept a carriage; but it cost him more in whips than in hay, and he saved the expense of his stable in his kitchen.

He became at last a great man, according to the city acceptation—for he was a director of a half-broken insurance company, and bank ;—every body looked up to him, not because he *would*, but because he *could* be of service to them ; and the president of one of the banks was heard to say publicly one day, that he believed that H—— was one of the most moneyed men in the city. Thus he lived, and thus will he die, without ever having conceived even the abstract idea of any pursuit, but that of money, money, money ; or any enjoyment but in its accumulation.

But little D——, on the contrary, was determined to be a gentleman, according to the fashionable idea of the present day in our cities. As he was to be rich, there was no occasion for him to know any thing—but how to enjoy it like a gentleman. He accordingly took his degree as the head dunce in the college ; and the first thing he did on coming into the possession of nearly half a million, was to send out his measure for a suit of clothes to a London tailor. He forthwith enlisted himself under some tavern bucks, and strutted up and down Broadway, with a surtout which saved the corporation the trouble of sweeping the streets—was seen everywhere at public places and parties, without doing any thing but yawn at the one, and stand in every body's way in the other, eating pickled-oysters. His estimate of a party, where a man of feeling and refinement would go to enjoy elegant society, and rational amusement, was always founded on the quantity of porter, wine, and pickled-oysters, handed round. Never was he

known, on any occasion, to do any one thing either pleasing or useful,—and, of course, in a little time he attained to the reputation of a fine gentleman; because, as he never did any thing, he must needs be so; employment being unworthy that high character. Some of the best bred people doubted his pretensions, until he thought of finding fault with every thing he heard and saw, when the opinion of his high breeding became unanimous.

Whether the people got tired of him, or he grew tired of the people, I don't exactly know; but in order to get a new gloss, he went abroad, staid six months, and came back vastly improved; for he found this country more intolerable than ever,—a sure sign of excessive refinement, especially as he made a point of proclaiming his opinion aloud at all parties. When I was last at N—— I saw him in a book-store, reading a book upside down, and dressed as follows: to wit, one little hat, with a steeple crown; one pair of corsets; one coat, so tight he could just breathe; one pair of pantaloons, so immeasurably wide and loose you could hardly tell whether they were petticoats or not; I don't recollect the residue of his costume,—but his hair came out from beneath his hat like an ostrich's tail, and he stuck out behind like the African Venus. No doubt the ladies found him quite irresistible.

One might moralize and speculate on what had been the different estimation of these young men, had they pursued a course becoming their fortune and education, and devoted themselves to a useful

or brilliant career. Had they employed part of their fortunes, and their leisure, in adorning their minds, and encouraging a taste for refined, elegant, and scientific pursuits. Although perhaps they might not have attained to any lofty eminence, they would have become associated, at least, with those that were eminent. They might have become their patrons, if not their equals, and attained to a blameless, nay, noble immortality, as the munificent encouragers of genius ; instead of being, in their lives, the contempt of the virtuous and the wise ; and in their deaths, the companions of oblivion. But I have already tired myself, and so—Good by.

## LETTER VI.

DEAR FRANK,

IN my last letter, if I remember right, I *totes* you (as they say in Virginia) up to Richmond, by what may be called a circumbendibus. Since then I have made an excursion to York and Williamsburgh; the one celebrated as the place where the last blow of our revolutionary war was struck; the other as having been the ancient seat of the state government. Yorktown is on the right bank of York river, directly at its mouth. It now exhibits an appearance of desolation and decay, which, being so seldom seen in our youthful country, is the more apt to excite the notice of a stranger. These ruins are not so much the effect of time, as the consequence of neglect and desertion, and possess, of course, nothing of the interest belonging to antiquities. A few years ago a great fire happened here, which completed the desolation of the place, by singling out, as its victims, with a sort of capricious cruelty, many of the best houses in the town. Immediately opposite to York is the town of Gloucester, consisting, as far as I could see, of a few poplars.

But, whether flourishing or in ruins, Yorktown will ever be an object of peculiar interest, as the scene where the progress of European arms terminated,

there, and I hope for ever in the new world, whose fate it so long was, to be domineered over by petty states, situated at a distance of three thousand miles, and whose sovereigns, though incapable of governing at home, affected to tyrannize here. The time, I hope, is not far distant, when not an inch of this great continent will be tributary to any other quarter of the globe; and when, if we choose to extend our ambition so far, we may have colonies in Europe, as Europe has so long had in America. Every nation, like every dog, has its day, and the splendours of the civilized world, which rose in the ruddy east, may set at last in the glowing west, equally bright and glorious.

In the evening I traced the outlines of the British fortifications, accompanied by an escort of a dozen boys, who pointed out the remains of the house where Lord Cornwallis had his head-quarters, and which he was obliged to abandon before the end of the siege, on account of the shower of bombs which fell on it, and at length destroyed every part but the chimney, which, if I remember right, is yet standing. These lively historians of the "village train" were exceedingly communicative, and answered all my questions with one voice—that is, they all talked at once. There is a tradition current here, the truth of which I cannot vouch for, that after quitting the house I mentioned, Cornwallis occupied a cave, which I was shown, excavated in the side of a bank fronting on the river. It consists of two rooms, cut or scraped, in a soft sandstone, and is thirty or forty feet under

ground, so that it is entirely bomb proof. Whether his lordship ever made this his head-quarters or not, certain it is, that such is the common tradition here, although I confess, an old weather-beaten Scotchman, living on the beach, close by, asked our servant, "if we were such d—d fools, as to believe that an English general, and a *lord*, would hide himself in a cave?" As to English generals, as far as my observation extends, they do things pretty much like other men; and as for lords, I see no reasonable cause, why they should not be as much afraid of bombs as plain misters. However, I have no disposition to undervalue the prowess of Lord Cornwallis, who, I believe, was a good sort of a man enough, and feel particularly grateful to him for getting cooped up at York, and surrendering as he did to General Washington and our allies.

From York to Williamsburgh, is, I believe, about twelve miles up the river. I am not good at counting milestones, and if I were, there is not material for a milestone in all the region of sea sand. This river abounds in fish, oysters, and crabs, and, as might be expected, there are large masses of oyster-shells along the banks, I suppose left there in days of yore by the Indians, and covered, in process of time, by the decomposition of vegetable matter. They are at present, however, made use of to form a cement to the system of our geological school; which, without this new species of geological lime, would not hold together half a year. If I were to make a settlement in a new country, it should be

where never oyster vegetated, or crab crawled, or fish swam, for each of these is a staunch auxiliary to idleness. Nothing but the bundle of habits a man carries at his back makes him an industrious animal, and consequently the greater his wants, the more he will labour. But these fish and crabs afford such provoking facilities to satisfy the most craving of these, that he is thereby enabled to be idle without starving—and idleness is vice to those who cannot supply the tedium of bodily inertness by the labours of the mind. This is one bad effect of great oyster-banks; another is, that the shells, in process of time, get into the hands of the philosophers, and become, with the assistance of “Babylonian bricks” and “Nimrod straw,” the materials for another Tower of Babel, and a consequent confusion of tongues, enough to puzzle a man out of his senses. The town or city of Williamsburgh, once the metropolis of Virginia, and a mighty emporium of tobacco, is built in the form of a W, in compliment to King William; for it is apparent that the first settlers here were right loyal, from the names they gave to different places. There is a fine gothic-looking college here, which I saw at a little distance, but did not visit, having had quite enough of colleges in my day. I never go near one, without getting a vertigo, occasioned by the recollection of some of those confounded mathematics, which sent me headlong to the tail of the class, while honest L—— *demonstrated* himself to the head, and got the first honour; though, between ourselves, I was obliged to write his *valedictory*.

The mathematical studies are, undoubtedly, at the head of the useful, but they ought not to be made the sole objects of preference in the distribution of college honours, as is too much the case, I think, in our country. In my opinion, too little attention, by far, is paid to classical literature and belleslettres, and to this neglect, in all probability, may be traced, in some considerable degree, the want of that classical and belleslettres taste, which, in all polite nations, is considered the great characteristic of a well-educated gentleman. The most vulgar of men may be a great practical mathematician, but I never yet met with a man, eminent as a classical and belleslettres scholar, who did not possess a considerable degree of refinement of mind and manners. Polite literature ought, therefore, I think, to be encouraged and rewarded in our colleges, equally, at least, with those sciences which are exclusively and practically useful. If not necessary to the wants, it is essential to the beauty and grace of society; is a decisive evidence of politeness, taste, and refinement; and equally contributes to the reputation and happiness of a nation.

There is another portion of the system of education pursued in most of our colleges, which, in reference to its moral effects, deserves, in my mind, to be held up to universal reprobation, as calculated to debase the human mind, at a period when habits are formed, and the foundation laid for every thing useful and noble, or base and contemptible. I mean the detestable statute lately introduced into many

of these institutions, obliging the student either to become his own accuser ; to betray his associates ; or pledge his honour to a falsehood. For example : if a bell is rung at night, and wakes up the drowsy professor, or any equally important prank is played by some unknown offender, it is the duty, enjoined by this statute, for any student acquainted with the transaction, to inform the professor forthwith, even though the offender be his brother, or dearest associate. If, however, no one is found contemptible enough to become a voluntary traitor to his companions, the whole of the students are called up, and those acquainted with the offender must either turn accusers, or pledge their *honour* to a falsehood, by declaring, under that sanction, that they are ignorant of the author of this important transgression. If they refuse either to turn accusers, or tell a falsehood, they are subject to expulsion. What pleasant alternatives, and what an admirable system for inculcating faith and honour in the minds of those, whose stations and opportunities render it probable, that many of them will rise to situations in society, where their examples will have an extensive influence, and their principles and conduct be subjects of national importance. If we want traitors—Benedict Arnolds—this is the way to get them. The first duty—with due reverence to the faculty of every college, past, present, and future ; the first duty of every man, in every situation, is never to do any thing mean or contemptible. No duty obliges him to betray his associates, nor can he ever be placed in

any situation to demand the sacrifice of his faith or his honour.

But, in these cases, the student is called upon, by the guardians of his principles, to make these sacrifices, for what? for the discovery of some little peccadillo, of no consequence; some piece of boyish mischief, or harmless waggery, innocent in itself, or only wicked, as it may please the faculty to decide on its turpitude. Of what consequence are these slight circumstances to the interests or the usefulness of colleges? and of what consequence is it not to society, that men should be educated to despise treachery and falsehood? It is not one of the least of the ill effects of this dangerous statute, that the most stupid and contemptible of the students, for the most part, obtain the honours of the colleges, by becoming the talebearers of their class, in preference to young men whose talents and acquirements are immeasurably superior, but who, sustained by the lofty pride of genius, disdain to recommend themselves by such debasing subserviency.

There was at P——, a young fellow from South Carolina, and another from somewhere else, I forget where. The former entered the head of the class, the other next; and, during the two first years, there was a contest for precedency. The Carolinian was a fine spirited lad, with a great deal more genius than industry, but with enough of the latter to give him a decided superiority over his competitor, who was heavy and cunning, but as industrious as a beaver. A new president was appointed, at the

beginning of the third year, who, forgetting that the college was not a theological school, always gave the preference at examinations to boys who told tales, like good lads, and prayed through their noses. With the natural cunning, which seems to be the instinct of petty minds, the heavy lad forthwith took to being exceedingly pious, and tickled the president, who had as much curiosity as aunt Kate, by telling him every thing that was said and done by the students, in their hours of relaxation and confidence. The fruits of this soon appeared. At the next term, the Carolinian made a splendid examination, but the other told the most tales, and was awarded the first place in the class, to the astonishment of every body not in the secret. At commencement, the former delivered an oration of his own, replete with classical and original beauties; the latter spoke one written for him by the president, on the necessity of converting the Hottentots, apes, and baboons. The Carolinian is now one of the most distinguished orators of congress, respected and admired by all honourable men; and the last I heard of the other was, his being prosecuted and heavily fined, for telling some tales, not quite true, about a young lady, in pursuance of the old habit he learned at college. He teaches a school at —, but is studying divinity, with a view, I suppose, of getting into a profession so justly venerated, that it not unfrequently rescues ignorance, arrogance, and stupidity from merited contempt.

I am very much mistaken, if the enforcement of

this detestable statute will not go near to destroy the institutions where it is adopted, by subjecting the students either to expulsion, or driving them into open resistance. To say the truth, I don't think it would be a subject of much regret, if this were to be the case, since I consider it of much less consequence, that a man should be without a diploma, than that he should be debased by a habit of tale-bearing and treachery to his companions. If colleges cannot exist under a different code of morality, the sooner they die the better; we can get our boys educated at academies and grammar schools; and it is better to go without a *degree*, than live debased. I am satisfied, that the attempt to enforce this niggardly statute will, ere long, shake these institutions to the centre, for the days of monkish ignorance, and consequent slavish submission to every thing which monks prescribed, are past. Even boys cannot now be taught that it is a *principle of false honour*, to refuse to become spies and telltales.

A word or two more on the subject of colleges. I was never much struck with the good sense or propriety of placing these establishments in small towns, rather than large cities. If this is done with a view to preserve the morals of the students from corruption, I believe the object is not generally attained. The vices of small towns are generally of a lower and more contemptible character, and principally connected with the tavern. In great cities the hours of relaxation may be spent in various amusements, innocent, and even elegant in their

nature. Nay, there is something in the very aspect of a large town, in the perpetual succession of objects novel and various, that presents continual amusement to the mind, without the trouble of seeking it laboriously or expensively. But in the desperate monotony of a small country town, there is but one resource for passing leisure time—and that is the tavern, where, too often, is imbibed not only low manners, but a vice which, of all others, carries with it the surest ruin. I mean the habit of tipping—the *consumption* of the mind—fatal and incurable. I have seen men, who had been gamblers, or who had lost themselves for a time in the depths of licentious indulgence, return once, twice, to virtue and usefulness, like the dove to the ark. But the habit of drunkenness operates as a sentence of eternal banishment from all that is useful and beautiful; it is the third and last flight of the patriarch's dove, and he who takes it, returns no more.

I consider, therefore, that a situation which, more than any other, exposes a young man to the temptation of this beastly and incurable vice, ought to possess very many advantages to counterbalance this most serious objection, an objection by no means imaginary. Those who may chance to stop at a tavern, in one of the collegiate towns, cannot fail to observe a number of young men lounging about the place, inside or out, some in slippers and morning gowns, others in buckish coats or long surtouts. These are students, sent hither by their parents, to keep them out of idleness and bad habits. The

habit of frequenting taverns almost invariably leads to a habit of tippling. A man may go thither, at first, without any inclination to drink, but simply to hear the news, or see the travellers arrive. Here two temptations await him. He sees others drink, and he perceives that he is not a welcome guest, unless he calls for something. Those who have seen by what fine and imperceptible threads we are drawn, easily, slowly, yet surely, into the most fatal habits, ought to tremble, when they place their offspring in a situation where they are thus assailed. For my part, I should consider a young man, placed within reach of theatres, and other amusements, so obnoxious to professors, and where he could enjoy, at intervals, elegant and improving society, as in a situation far more favourable to his intellect, morals, and manners, than in a little town, where all his amusements and associates are sought in a tavern.

The principal arguments I have heard urged in favour of establishing colleges in small towns are, fewer temptations to vice, or idleness, and superior cheapness. I have remarked on the former, and as to the two latter, I put no faith in them whatever. If the strong incentives of the fear of disgrace on one hand, and the hope of distinction on the other, aided by that love of knowledge, which is the noble characteristic of human beings, the source of their superiority over all other animals, are not sufficient to make boys study, is it to be supposed they will be driven to it, by the mere absence of other amusements? Besides, the argument in effect does not

apply here, because the amusements of a village tavern, however low, are still amusements, and the temptations of drunkenness are just as much to be dreaded, as those of the theatre. To the argument of superior cheapness, I have little to say, except that I look upon it as a consideration, which, even were it well founded, ought not to weigh against the dangers and disadvantages I have slightly sketched.

After this "big talk," I have hardly time to say, that Williamsburgh seems to be experiencing the fate of all the works of man, none of which, except the labours of his mind, (and the pyramids,) seem destined to last for ever. "God made the country, and man made the town;" and the difference of the work is exemplified in their progress and decay. The one is subject only to the operation of the elements, while the other depends for its growth and prosperity on a thousand accidents. The variable course of trade; the caprices of a despot; the establishment of a college, or the opening of a canal, can make a city flourish or decay. But he who draws his support from the bosom of the earth, is independent of these chances, accidents, and caprices. This is illustrated by the unceasing complaints, petitions, remonstrances, and clamours of merchants and manufacturers, asking protection, monopoly, or bounty, when contrasted with the independent silence of the farmer, who asks nothing from his government, but equal laws, and nothing of Heaven, but rain and sunshine. Thus Virginia continues to flourish, while York and Williamsburgh continue to decay.

I must not forget to tell you, that the principal tavern at Williamsburgh is under the special patronage of Sir Walter Raleigh, who still stands his ground here, against General Wayne, General Jackson, and other tutelaries, on the great western roads. Wise people, that is to say, people who fancy themselves wise, may undervalue the distinctions of a signpost; but when I see a man's name inscribed upon these tablets of immortality, in various parts of a country, I feel that it has taken deep root. A senate may decree a statue; it is the public sentiment decrees a sign. Sir Wat is dressed in high ton—his hand in his side, his ruff up to his ears, and exhibits the identical smile with which he captivated the virgin affections of good Queen Bess, as is shrewdly suspected. Good by.

## LETTER VII.

DEAR FRANK,

YOUNG nations, like young children, seem destined to endure certain diseases before their constitutions can be said to be well established. So, also, must they encounter a great variety of experience before they can become wise. But nations have a great advantage over us poor single gentlemen mortals, since they often last long enough to reap the benefits of the experience thus painfully acquired. With individuals it is quite different; for by the time we grow tolerably wise by the aid of personal experience, we are old, and peradventure die, just as we have become qualified, in our own opinion, for the true enjoyment of existence. Life is a tune which has no *da capo*; and those who play it wrong at first sight, never have an opportunity of correcting their errors.

The disease at present prevailing more than all others, in our country, is that of *cutting teeth*; one of the earliest that seizes upon infants. It goes at present by the name of *speculation*, and, like other epidemics, seems to be in regular progress from one part of the United States to another. The symptoms of this disease are easily discernible. At first, that is to say, in the preparatory stage, the people of a city or town will go plodding on in the old, sober,

money-making way, *peu a peu*, for some years, buying and selling a thing for what it happens to be worth at the time. At length some rare genius springs up, and, like an inspired Pythia, in breeches, foretels that this city *must* be one of the greatest of the day. Then the diminutive present, like little Tom Thumb, is swallowed up by the great red cow of the future;—the inspiration spreads,—he who has nothing to lose sometimes gets rich, if he has discretion to sell out in time; and all get something, except the honest gentleman, who fares pretty much like the person in whose hand the fire goes out in the play of “Robin’s alive, as ’live as a bee.” The poor man gets a pretty pile of debts on his back, and becomes the jest of his fellow-playmates, who got rid of the fire just before it went out.

I remember I happened to be in a certain great city, some ten or a dozen years ago, when the folks were just cutting their eye-teeth, and buying land as if every lot had a gold mine in it. Prices were then given, which have ever since impoverished the purchasers; which they have never been able to realize, and probably never will. There is a great difference in buying land on speculation, and purchasing it to derive a support from its produce. In the one case, the man depends altogether upon its prospective value, derives nothing from it in the intermediate space of time, and if he sells it for its first cost, still he is a loser to the amount of the interest of the purchase-money, and of the taxes. In the other case, admitting the man, at the end of twenty or fifty years,

disposes of it for even less than he gave, still, if it has supported him in the meanwhile, it has been a good bargain. The good old way, therefore, of buying land for what it is, not what it possibly may be worth, is, I think, the best after all; and of those who acted under a different idea, one possibly may have grown unreasonably rich, while fifty have become uncomfortably poor. This epidemic, I observe, in its progress extends to every article of sale or purchase, and generally peoples several of those public infirmaries called county jails, before it is checked effectually. It is then generally passed over to the next city, where it operates precisely the same, without distinction of climate; for it would seem that in this case, contrary to the usual practice, a man will take up with nobody's experience but his own, nor believe in the mischief until he becomes a victim. Cupidity is ever excited by a solitary instance of successful speculation, infinitely more strongly than discouraged by a hundred examples of victims sacrificed at the shrine of this golden calf.

The great northern cities having pretty well got through the cutting of their teeth, the disease seems now making a successful progress to the south. Washington, which seems to have been begotten in speculation, and brought up in it too, is just now cutting its wisdom teeth, and Richmond appears to me to be following its example. London, Cairo, Peking, Ispahan, and even the great Babylon, with its "*hieroglyphic bricks*," and "*Nimrod straw*," are, and were, nothing to what these two auspicious cities are one

day to become, and prices are given for land by persons properly inoculated with the mania, which will cause their heirs to make wry faces, or I am mistaken. I know a little of these matters myself; for I was once, for my sins, advised by a knowing man who saw deep into millstones, to buy a lot in the neighbourhood of the certain great city I mentioned before, and which, though generally more than half covered with water, and producing nothing but bullfrogs, he assured me would double the purchase-money whenever the city came that way, which it evidently had a great inclination to do. But the city, "a murrain take her!" not being a Dutch city, and having no predilection for marshes or frogs, obstinately took a different direction, notwithstanding my friend had demonstrated to the contrary. My speculation still remains on my hands; it is now worth almost half what it cost, and that half has been paid in taxes for opening the neighbouring streets. Nay, its principal staple commodity of frogs is extinct, in consequence of the depredations of certain rogues, who settled close by, on purpose—to hear the music.

That Richmond will increase rapidly in exact proportion to the increase of population and agriculture in the range of country watered by James river and its branches, I have no doubt. But I do doubt whether either the one or other will increase, at least for a very long time, in a way to realize the anticipations entertained by many people here. The Atlantic states, except such as possess a back territory equal, or nearly equal, in fertility and in natural

advantages, to the western states, and those which will from time to time grow out of the Mississippi and Missouri territories, will not hereafter increase in a ratio corresponding with their previous growth. The more active and enterprising—the people who partake of youth, enterprise, and hardihood, and who increase the actual productions of the earth by their labours, are looking more and more to the west, “over the hills and far away.” It is in that direction the tide which knows no ebb, will continue to flow, till the great vacuum is filled up, when, possibly, a reaction will take place, and people re-emigrate to the back-woods of the Atlantic coast. The prospect of exchanging a little exhausted farm, for one ten times as large, where the labours and privations of a few years are repaid by the sweets of independence to themselves and their children, will allure many of the young ones of the east, to the land of promise in the west.

The people of the United States partake, in no small degree, of the habits of their predecessors, the aborigines, who, when they have exhausted one hunting-ground, pull up stakes, and incontinently march off to another, four or five hundred miles off, where game is plenty. So with honest brother Jonathan. When he has eaten up every thing around him, and worked his land to skin and bone, and when his house is just on the point of tumbling about his ears; instead of taking the trouble of restoring the one, or rebuilding the other, he abandons both; and packing up his moveables, consisting of

his wife and chubby boys, in a wagon, whistles himself to the banks of the Ohio, the Illinois, or the Missouri,—all one to him. Here he builds him a log cabin,—and his axe is like the whirlwind, which levels the tallest trees of the forest in a twinkling. By-and-by he puts an addition to his cabin ; and last of all, builds him a stately house, and becomes a judge, a general, or a member of congress,—for our people are jacks of all trades, and the same man can turn his hand or his head to any thing.

It is easy to perceive the effects that will result, and which in part have already resulted, from this habit of emigration, for which our people are distinguished. The most hardy, active, industrious children of the elder states, who have little or no birth-right at home,—who have sagacity to perceive the advantages, and courage to encounter the difficulties of so long a journey, go where the land is cheap, and labour repaid with abundance. Those who remain behind, will consist of a sober, regular race, forming a very useful ingredient in our mixed population ; possessing, perhaps, more of the elegances, but less of the solid independence of life ; and who will make as good citizens, but not as good soldiers, as the hardy emigrants to the *new countries*. They will increase, perhaps, the manufactures of the country ; but probably the produce of the land, which is the consequence of well-directed industry, will not increase in equal proportion, so long as there remains such a field for enterprise in the western world.

I think it results from this reasoning, that the san-

guine calculations of the growth of our cities east of the Alleghanies, are ill-founded in some degree, and that consequently speculations made in the spirit of this misguided second-sight, will end at last in disappointment to somebody. I don't say that the present purchasers will not be gainers ; for it is easy to blow a bubble to a certain size. One buys of another as his imagination becomes inflated with the vapour of mighty gains, and on they scuffle, treading each other's heels, all pocketing a little, except honest jack-come-last, who, as usual, pays the piper, and like the rear of a retreating army, sustains all the loss. He who makes the growth of our cities, for the last twenty years, the basis of his calculation for the next twenty, if I am not mistaken, will, with here and there an exception, be severely disappointed. Their increase has been that of a young child, which grows more the first twenty years than all the rest of its life afterwards. Neither our past experience, nor the example of other countries, has any material application to our future destiny. The race of this country is like that of the swift *Heirie*, whose rider, as the Arabs say, if you inquire of him where he is going, is out of hearing before he can answer ; and, as respects other nations, the period of their existence, which affords any grounds of comparison with this young country, is too distant and obscure to offer either example or instruction sufficiently clear to form the groundwork either of speculation or calculation. In countries whose limits are circumscribed on all sides, either by the ocean, or by neighbouring

territories, equally populous, the increasing numbers of the people are enabled to supply their wants by improving their lands, and modes of cultivation;— by the erection of manufactures, and the fostering of new incitements to industry: every foot of land in the space thus occupied, increases in its products, and consequently in its value, proportionably with the increase of population. But it is quite different in the states which are the best peopled among us. The increase of numbers, when it arrives at a certain point, is always followed by emigration, rather than by any exertions to support the increase by those improvements I stated; and of course, while there still remain fertile and pleasant territories in the undefinable limits of the west to be settled, it will generally happen, that the growth of the elder states will be retarded, while that of the new is accelerated by emigrations. In Connecticut, and probably in nearly all the New-England states, I believe there has been little growth in numbers, since the western states became objects of attention, and offered safety, as well as competence. If the land, either in town or country, has risen in its nominal price, it has but little, if any, increased in value. The difference is owing, I imagine, almost entirely to speculation, and to the depreciation of money,—the consequence of enormous emissions of paper in all parts of the United States.

By-and-by, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Ohio, will be old states, increasing indeed in population, but by no means in comparison with their former ratio.

They, in time, will become the parents of new states, far in the wilderness, and the current of emigration will continue to flow, till it reaches the shores of another Atlantic in the west. Old DANIEL BOON is still the file-leader. He was the first settler of Kentucky, which soon grew too populous for him; and by regular emigrations he has reached the Missouri, which he is now following up to the Rocky Mountains. If he lives, he will, I have little doubt, get to the mouth of Columbia river, and there, perhaps, sit down, like another Alexander of Macedon, and weep, because there are no more worlds to—*settle*.

This is a true travelling letter. I began at Richmond, and ended at the mouth of the Columbia river; a tolerable journey enough. In my next I will try to set you down somewhere nearer home, if possible; perhaps on the top of the Blue Ridge, if I can get thus far. Good by.

## LETTER VIII.

DEAR FRANK,

MAYBE you have seen the contest of two rival ladies, of pretty nearly equal family, fortune, and pretensions, for the supreme dominion over a little country town—how they dressed, and fidgeted, what low courtesies, and sly, civil, disagreeable inquiries they made when they met, and how they always endeavoured to outstay each other at a tea-party, to have the last word, which, like the last blow, is decisive of victory. It is thus with our cities, little and great. New-York and Philadelphia, being incontestably at the head of the *ton*, are for ever disputing the palm of fashion, science, literature, fine arts, “and all that sort of thing.” One is better built—the other has the finest port; one has the most commerce—the other the most manufactures; one has its steeples—the other its shot-towers; one has its Hudson and East rivers—the other its Delaware and Schuylkill. When the Philadelphian is hard pushed, he boasts of his squares and his wide streets, his beef and his butter; and when the New-Yorker is in the greatest extremity, he opens his *battery* upon his antagonist, and demolishes him in a twinkling. Boston values itself on its town-meetings and athenæum. Baltimore on its taste in music: and Charleston is

proud of its races. Thus all have some straw to tickle themselves with, and the natives of each are astonished, when they meet, that any body should question their superiority.

Richmond and Norfolk are the belles of "Ould Virginia;" one being the beauty of the region of river alluvion, the other of the region of sea sand. This, of course, is a sufficient reason for a most vehement rivalship. Though at the distance of nearly two hundred miles, they seem to consider the prosperity of one as interfering with that of the other, and consequently look with a jealous eye on every internal improvement in roads or canals, that is exclusively advantageous to either. They remind us of the good dame Ashfield, in Speed the Plough, whose great rival in the village was one Mrs. Grundy. Nothing happened to the former, that she did not exclaim, "I wonder what Mrs. Grundy will say to this?" until, at last, honest Farmer Ashfield gets out of patience, and exclaims, "Dom Mrs. Grundy, you're always dinging, dinging her in my ears."

This rivalship is not peculiar to your consequential cities, having a town-house, a corporation, constables, catchpoles, and such like dignitaries, but pervades all neighbouring little towns throughout the world. Indeed, the less they are, the more inveterate seems their jealousy. The smallest trifle sets them pulling caps, and nothing can produce the least unanimity, except the bone of contention being given to one in particular, when all the rest unite against the fortunate Mrs. Grundy, and pull her reputation to pieces.

In addition to this, every great town has a number of little ones attached to its interests, and taking its part, like some small German prince in the quarrels of Europe. They put one in mind of a battle between two city mastiffs of distinction, when, you know, every little bobtail crop-eared cur sallies forth to take sides, growling, showing his teeth, cocking his stump-tail bolt upright, and lifting his leg at every post in the neighbourhood with great intrepidity. This diminutive jealousy of our neighbours, I believe, is not peculiar to any nation or age; it subsists everywhere, and at all times, but still it is not the less ridiculous for all that.

James river, on which Richmond lies, is navigable for ships to within a few miles of the city, where it is obstructed by a bar, beyond which only smaller vessels can pass. This is the reason why the people of Norfolk call the place "*Shallow Richmond*," as King Richard distinguishes his rival competitor. It is in contemplation to remove this bar, under the belief that it was originally caused by a deposition of logs. If so, the project is feasible enough; but if it arises from any peculiarity in the natural current of the river, there will certainly be a bar at all times somewhere near this spot. From the junction of the Appomattox with James river up to Richmond, the latter stream pursues a course singularly winding, so that in one place you sail nearly in a circle for some miles. This is called the *Dutchman's gap*, a name which they explain by a story, which is peculiarly remarkable, as being the only instance, either in

history or tradition, where a Dutchman outwitted any body. I would tell it you, but you would not comprehend it, without a description of the place, which I can't afford to give just now.

One thing struck me here as a peculiarity. It may be common, but I have not observed it before. The banks of this river, for upwards of forty miles, are, in every instance, singularly contrasted. If high on one side, it is low and flat on the other, and in no one instance did I see an exception to this rule. It is not my business to explain these matters. Let the philosophers look to them, if, as is very possible, they have not explained them before. After the junction of the two streams, the river widens, and just here it is that the ship navigation properly ends, in coming up from the bay. The place is called *City-Point*, a *lucus a non lucendo*—there being no city, only every body wonders why one was not built there. Below this, commence those extensive flats where the early settlers first broke the soil of the United States; and where the first sun rose and set on the natives of the eastern hemisphere, pursuing the peaceful occupations of husbandry in this wilderness of the west. It is here then that we see the spot where first was planted the seeds of this great country—mighty in its present vigorous youth, but far mightier in its future destinies. The place, therefore, is one of the most interesting to a reflecting mind (as mine is of course) of any in this country. To an American it is peculiarly interesting. You know I have travelled to Rome—seen all the ruins—and been besieged in

that renowned city by at least ten thousand beggars. Then I have been up the Archipelago, where I saw several things that are not to be seen, as most travellers do. Then I have been at Smyrna, where I never wish to go again, and seen the very spot where old Homer, as they affirm, kept a grammar-school. A strange place, there being not a single birch tree in the whole neighbourhood! From thence we may infer, that “probably,” as the learned member of the Agricultural Society of Otaheite, &c. &c. &c. &c. would say—that, *probably*, either Homer used the *ferula*, instead of a birchen twig—or that he did not approve of flagellation—or, lastly, that he never kept a school in this place. This last supposition is rendered more “probable,” by the claim of the Island of Chios to the same honour; but every body knows, that islanders always have been, and always will be, the greatest braggarts in the world. But to return, I have travelled from Smyrna to Constantinople, in which progress I was almost bitten to death by fleas. Here, too, I encountered a Christian exile, who bore this testimony to the exuberance of Christian charity—“I have travelled among savages, pagans, mussulmen, and whenever I entered their doors, they gave me all that my wants demanded, and felt the offer of remuneration as an insult—but when I come among Christians, I can get nothing without *money*.” But he had never been in Old Virginia.

Yet, after having seen (in books) all these remains of ancient, or exhibitions of modern, magnificence, I

can honestly say, that they excited nothing like the feeling I experienced, on visiting the spot where the first permanent settlement was made by the pilgrims, in this *our* western hemisphere. Nothing now remains, but the land they cultivated, and their graves; but the spot is well known, and every century, while, like a river, it carries millions of light wonders to the ocean of oblivion, will only render it more interesting and illustrious. It is closely connected with the first links of a great chain of causes and effects, that have already changed the destiny of the *new*, and will probably change that of the *old* world. He, therefore, who cannot feel the inspiration of this spot, need not take the trouble to go to Rome or Athens, for he may rest assured, that the fine and subtile spirit which lives, and moves, and has its being, in the future and the past alone, is not an inmate of his mind.

But to return to the honest, humdrum, present time, which is almost as bad as jumping off a horse at full speed. The land in the vicinity of James river, below Richmond, and indeed in the greater part of Lower Virginia, is greatly injured by being planted too often without its strength being sustained by manure. It reminds me of poor S——, who grew prematurely old, and turned his head into a pine barren, by cultivating his faculties overmuch. This was the reason why I never studied too hard, though, to do myself justice, I used to batter that most infamous science, algebra, until I was *plus* in stupidity, and *minus* in every thing else.

The reason why the land in this part of the country is so generally impoverished, is, probably, the great number of slaves, who enable the owner to plant a greater portion of his land every year. The temptation of immediate profit is too strong to overcome the anticipation of future want. The present and the future are, indeed, always at war with each other; and it is not yet quite certain, whether in a worldly view, the votaries of one or other are the most wise. With this wise observation, I bid you good by.

Your's always.

## LETTER IX.

DEAR FRANK,

ADVANCING into the country in the direction we were advised to follow, we crossed the Pamunkey, a branch of York river, which, flowing through a clay soil, is generally so muddy, that if Narcissus had made it his looking-glass, he never had died for love. The Indians, who inhabited the western shores of Chesapeake bay, seem to have had a singular predilection for the letter P, in giving names to the rivers. We have the Petapsco, Patuxent, Potomac, Piankatank, Powhatan,\* Pamaunck,† Pamunkey, and doubtless divers others, whose names have been altered by the Europeans. For it is to be recollected that the first settlers of an Indian country not only take away from the copper-coloured villains their lands and rivers, but give them new names, like the gipsies, who first steal children, and then, to disguise the theft, christen them anew.

Beyond the Pamunkey the country begins gradually to assume a more irregular appearance, and becomes diversified with hills and valleys. At first the soil is principally of clay, but as you proceed, it becomes gravelly for a space; and in approaching the Blue Ridge, again changes to a reddish clay. Much of

\* Now James river.

† Now York river.

the two first divisions of soil has never, I believe, been fertile, and certainly is not so now; but the last is considered fruitful. In riding along the road, we saw very few comfortable-looking houses. The better sort of people here, having little taste for highways, prefer building at a distance from them,—to get away from the dust, perhaps. Most of the houses on the public roads are taverns, and none of the best, although by no means desperate. In consequence of this, it results that no correct idea of Virginia can be formed by travelling on the great highways; and travellers, unless they deviate from them, will be much deceived, not only in their estimate of the soil, but of the houses.

I don't know if you recollect our knowing acquaintance, the London cockney traveller, who cut such a dash in your city last winter, and whose professed object in coming out to this country was, to give a correct account of it to his countrymen when he got home again. He had monopolized all the knowledge extant about England,—was a profound critic in cheese, porter, and roast beef,—and contradicted historians, travellers, and official documents,—without ceremony. He never saw a beggar in England in his life—denied tithes, poor-rates, and taxes, and always bought his poultry cheaper than in the cheapest parts of our country. He was *omnia suspendens naso*,—and could not see more than a hundred yards with the aid of a glass he wore suspended from his neck by a black riband. You may remember how we were tickled with the idea of his

travelling to the southward and westward, to see the country. He was hereabouts not long ago, and mistook a cluster of haystacks for a town, which doubtless he will describe as being a very mean place, with thatched roofs shaped like steeples ; without paint, and not better than Irish cabins. The last we heard of him was his getting nearly drowned, by driving his gig plump into a little clay-coloured branch of James river, which he mistook for a turnpike road. I should like to read his travels, for no doubt he will make ample amends for what he could not see, by describing what was not to be seen.

The first view we got of the mountains was from a hill, a few miles from Louisa court-house. You know I was *raised*, as they say in Virginia, among the mountains of the north, and I never see one that it does not conjure up a hundred pleasing associations. It was one of those evenings described by a homespun poet, who, I believe, few people ever heard of before, when,

“The purple hue of evening fell,  
Upon the low sequester'd dell,  
And scarce a ling'ring sunbeam play'd,  
Around the distant mountain's head.  
The sweet south wind broke to a calm,  
The dews of evening fell like balm.  
The night-hawk, soaring in the sky,  
Told that the shades of night were nigh.  
The bat began his dusky flight ;  
The whippoorwill, *our* bird of night,  
Ever unseen, yet ever near,  
His shrill note warbled in the ear ;

The buzzing beetle forth did hie  
 With busy hum, and heedless eye ;  
 The little watchman of the night—  
 The firefly, trimm'd his lamp so bright,  
 And took his merry airy round,  
 Along the meadow's fragrant bound ;  
 Where blossom'd clover, bath'd in dew,  
 In sweet luxuriance blushing grew," &c.

It was just such an evening when we first caught a view of the distant undulating mountain, whose fading blue outline could hardly be distinguished from the blue sky with which it almost seemed to mingle. Between us and the mountain was spread a wide landscape,—shade softening into shade, with such imperceptible gradations, as blended the whole into an indescribable harmony. Over all was spread that rich purple hue, which painters have often attempted to imitate in vain. All that they have been able to do is, to put us in mind of it, and leave the rest to imagination.—This is a good hint to me, and so I will say no more at present about the mountains.

At Louisa I bought a new horse,—one of your capital *racking* ponies, as they are yclept, who wriggled and twisted at such an execrable rate, that by the time we got to Charlottesville I felt as if I had been racked in good earnest. The great philosopher, Nimrod Babylonicus Brickibus, used to say very wisely, “that when a man was altogether taken up with himself, he was very apt to attend to nothing else,”—which is as true as that the fresh-water lakes were once salt ; for I remember nothing of the ride from Louisa to Charlottesville, except that Oliver's

horse stumbled in fording a branch of James river, at the western foot of the south mountain, and spilled him into the arms of the nymph of the stream. "Our armies swore terribly in Flanders," as Uncle Toby says,—but they were nothing to Noll, who abused the river, instead of his horse, in such a way, that if the river-gods had been in power, he would have fared rather badly. But as he escaped with only a wet jacket, I do suppose our republican rivers threw off the yoke of the river-gods, when they became independent. I will not describe Charlottesville, because we arrived there at night, half-asleep,—and left it half-awake in the morning.

I fear you will think we shall never get on to the Blue Ridge ; where I believe I promised to land you, safe and sound, in this letter. But I will fulfil my promise, happen what may. I can do this without forfeiting my character as "a regular built" traveller, whose duty it is to tell all he sees, and more besides,—since the only remarkable incident that occurred on the road was a stout battle between a magnanimous pig and a large mastiff, in which the pig utterly discomfited the mastiff, and incontinently carried off the enemy's artillery, consisting of a hollow marrow-bone. This is the only fight we have yet seen in Virginia, and therefore I thought it worth recording.

We ascended the Blue Ridge at Rockfish Gap, by a winding road, rising so gently as to be almost imperceptible ; nor should we have known the height to which we had arrived, had it not been for the gradual expansion of the prospect, which at last

became so extensive and magnificent, that I would describe it, if I thought I could communicate any thing of the impression I received. This I hope you will take as a sufficient reason for my declining the task. Nearly on the summit, a little descending to the west, stands an extensive tavern and boarding-house, where we halted for the night ; and where I advise you to stop, if you ever travel this way. The air is delightfully pure, elastic, and invigorating ;— a spring of the finest water in the world (except the waters of Helicon) bubbles from a rock of freestone close by ;—the house is exceedingly comfortable ; and the prospect of the long valley to the west, as it gradually faded, and melted, and became lost in the shades of night, was calculated to awaken the soul, —which so often falls fast asleep in the racket of noisy towns.

Nobody ever died here except the late landlord, who fell a victim to a disease which is occasionally epidemical in some parts, called the *whiskey fever*. Good by.

## LETTER X.

DEAR FRANK,

WE rose in the morning, bright and early, to descend the mountain, "all in the merry month" of June, the sweetest month of all the year, notwithstanding what our poets sing about May. This *may* be a very pleasant month in Italy or Greece, but commend me to something a little warmer than our May, which deals too much in north-east storms, to be quite to my taste. Were I a first-rate poet, that is to say, a lord, I would certainly pluck the crown of flowers from the head of May, to place it on the sunny brow of June, there to bloom in the midst of genial gales and fostering sunbeams.

In descending the mountain, we had a view, which, not being common even here, and entirely unknown among you, citizens, deserves at least an attempt to sketch it. We saw, what seemed a vast and interminable waste of waters, spreading far and wide, and covering the whole face of the lower world. The vapours of the night had settled in the wide valley, at the foot of the hill, and enveloped it in one unbroken sheet of mist, that in the gray obscurity of the morning, looked like a boundless ocean. But as the sun rose, a gentle breeze sprung up, and the vapours began to be in motion. As they lifted themselves lazily from

the ground, and rolled in closer masses towards the mountains, the face of nature gradually disclosed itself in all its varied and enchanting beauty. The imaginary sea became a fertile valley, extending up and down, as far as the eye could reach. In the midst of the green foliage of oaks and solemn pines, were seen rich cultivated lands, and comfortable farm-houses, surrounded by ruddy fields of clover, speckled with groups of cattle grazing in its luxuriant pastures, or reposing quietly among its blossoms. Still, as the mists passed silently away, new objects disclosed themselves, with a sweet delay, that enhanced their beauty. Here was seen a little town, and near it a field, animated with sturdy labourers. In one place two little rivers, after winding and coquetting through the meadows, sometimes approaching, sometimes receding, sometimes hid, and sometimes seen, joined their currents, and finally disappeared in the distant woods, beyond which a high peaked cliff, towering above the ascending vapours, glittered in the beams of the morning sun, like a giant capped with helmet of burnished gold. It seemed as if a new and blooming world was gradually emerging from chaos, and assuming the most beautiful arrangement, under the hand of some invisible agent cradled in the mists of the morning.

It seldom falls to the lot of city mortals to see such a scene—and it is seldom, I am told, that it falls to the lot of a traveller to behold it more than once. The impression it made I have since recalled with new delight. I hope to retain the remembrance for

a long time, and when at last it fades away in the succession of new scenes, new objects, new enjoyments, and new sufferings, I shall think I have lost a cherished relic of past times. I asked Oliver if he thought any of the learned geologists could make such a beautiful world? He answered me not—but broke out into a classical quotation, which he forgot to pervert as usual, and which he translated or paraphrased, at my request, as follows :

Fair flowers now deck the rural field,  
The trees in youthful bloom appear;  
The groves an ample foliage yield,  
And beauteous is the ripening year.

At the foot of the mountain we quitted the direct road, and deviated eighteen miles to the left, in order to visit a famous cave on the bank of the Shenandoah. We now entered on the limestone country, one of the most verdant, fruitful, and picturesque regions of the United States. The fields are greener, and the people that cultivate them are white men, whose labours being voluntary, seem to make the landscape smile. They are, a majority of them at least, laborious Dutchmen, who have gradually rolled down these valleys from their northern extremes, to the frontiers of Georgia. You see but few slaves, and every thing is the more gay for not being darkened by them—at least to my eyes. Here too, the rivers which, east of the mountain, are muddy and turbid, become pure and transparent as the fount of Parnassus, out of which poets drink—because they can get nothing stronger.

The mountain called the Blue Ridge, not only forms the natural, but the political division of Virginia. I know not whether you have observed it, but all the considerable states, to the south of New-York inclusive, have two little scurvy, distinct, and separate local interests, or rather local feelings, operating most vehemently, in a kind of undertone not much heard abroad, but, like certain domestic accents, exceedingly potent at home. The east and west sections of these states are continually at sixes and sevens, and as the west is generally the most extensive, as well as fruitful, it is gradually getting the upper hand of the other, and removing the seat of power farther into the interior. These distinctions, so far as I have been able to trace them, originated in the struggles of little village politicians striving to become popular, by affecting to be the guardians of the village rights, which they defend most manfully, long before they are attacked. Their wise constituents in time begin to perceive very clearly, that they have been very much imposed upon, and in fact made slaves of, by a few people in a distant corner of the state—and then nothing will do but a convention, to set matters right, and put things topsy-turvy.

This snug little rivalry is beginning to bud vigorously in Virginia. The people of whom I am now writing, call those east of the mountain *Tuckahoes*, and their country Old Virginia. They themselves are the *Cohees*, and their country New Virginia. The origin of these Indian phrases, I am not able to trace. I understand, however, that in parts of Vir-

ginia, east of the Blue Ridge, there is a species of large mushroom growing under ground, and known by the name of Tuckahoe. It may be, that as this part of Virginia was settled while the Indians inhabited the great valley, west of the Blue Ridge, they might have stigmatized the white settlers as Tuckahoes—mushrooms, in allusion to their being upstarts—new comers. If it were only a matter of six or eight hundred years ago, I might go near to prove, that the first settlers were arrant *Troglo-dytes*, and were called by the Indians Tuckahoe, because, like that notable fungus, they grew under ground. But this, among other matters, I leave to the future antiquarian.

Certain it is, that however these names may have originated, they are now the familiar terms by which the people of Old and New Virginia are designated, east of the Blue Ridge. It is the old story of Mrs. Farmer Ashfield and Mrs. Planter Grundy. Mrs. Ashfield, who leads the ton among the *Cohees*, squints at Mrs. Grundy, the fine lady of the Tuckahoes, because forsooth, and marry come up, my lady gives herself airs, and wears such mighty fine clothes, when she goes to the Springs. Now Goody Ashfield, for her part, don't care for fine things, not she; but then she can't bear to see some people take upon themselves, and pretend to be better or more genteel than other people. Then Madam Grundy, if the truth must be told, is sometimes apt to turn up her nose, when she sees plain Mrs. Ashfield industriously mending a pair of breeches, the original colour of

which is lost in the obscurity of patches. She *wonders* at her daughter pulling flax, or weaving, or turning a great spinning-wheel that deranges people's nerves sadly. *Wonders*, in a very kind and friendly way, why Farmer Ashfield can think of making such a slave of his daughter, and why, as he can afford it, he don't send her to one of the great boarding-schools in Philadelphia, to get a polish, and learn to despise her vulgar old father and mother. All these wonderments are, of course, wormwood to Mrs. Ashfield, who thereupon pulls Mrs. Grundy to pieces, when she goes away.

As to Squire Grundy and Farmer Ashfield, they have certain snug matters of dispute to themselves. The farmer insists upon it, at town-meetings and elections, that the squire enjoys greater political privileges than he does; that the country of Tuckahoe has more representatives in the legislature than it ought to have; that all Squire Grundy's negroes go to the polls and vote; that the seat of government ought to be removed, that the poor enslaved Cohees may not be *toted* all the way to Richmond to hear orations, and get justice; and that, finally, the squire gives himself such airs of superiority, that there is no such thing as getting along with him. On the other hand, Squire Grundy maintains that he pays more taxes than the farmer; that taxation and representation as naturally go together as whiskey and vagabonds; that not numbers but property ought to be represented; that his negroes are included in the number of voters because they are taxed; and that,

finally, the Cohees, not being able to comprehend all this, are a set of ignorant blockheads. The farmer says, "It is a dom lie;" and both parties are more convinced than before. The end of all this will be, that the Cohees will probably at last carry their point, and in consequence thereof, be just as well off as they were before.

I wish you would overcome your *vis inertia*, and write to me, addressed to ——, where I shall be on my return. I long to hear how Mrs. Kate makes head against the spots on the sun, which have frightened several women hereabouts into the spotted fever. The learned, I see, are hard at work about them, and ransacking the Encyclopedia famously. I wish 'em well. Of all people I know of, they are the most disinterested, for two-thirds of their time, at least, they not only labour without any reward, but without doing any good—which is very good in them. Good by.

## LETTER XI.

DEAR FRANK,

THE blacks form a distinguishing feature in the lowlands of the south; but diminish in numbers as you travel towards the mountains. They are of a great variety of shades,—from jet black to almost white. Indeed I have seen some of them who were still kept in bondage, whose complexions were rather lighter than their masters. I was much puzzled to account for these apparent caprices of nature in bestowing such singular varieties of complexion; but I soon found that she had good reasons to justify her.

The Negroes are in general a harmless race, although they are more apt than their masters to transgress the laws, partly I suppose because a great many things which are lawful to white men, are forbidden to the blacks. Being, in general, more ignorant than the whites of the poorer classes, they are of course more given to petty vices, and are, perhaps, not so honest. They seem, indeed, a gay, harmless, and unthinking race; for those who are likely to have few agreeable subjects for their thoughts, Providence seems kindly to divest, in some degree, of the capacity to reflect long on any thing. They are by far the most musical of any portion of the inhabitants of the United States, and in the even-

ing I have seen them reclining in their boats on the canal at Richmond, playing on the *banjo*, and singing in a style—I dare say, equal to a Venetian gondolier. Then they whistle as clear as the notes of the fife;—and their laugh is the very echo of thoughtless hilarity.

How would it mortify the pride of the white man, and humble his lordly sense of superiority, if it were indeed found, that these poor fellows were happier than those who affect to pity their miseries. And yet it is possible,—and, from my soul, I hope it is so; for then I should be relieved from certain doubts about the equal distributions of Providence, that confound me not a little. They certainly are exempt from many of the cares that beset their masters,—and instead of being in bondage to the future, and slaves to their offspring, have every assurance, that the sons of their old masters will be the masters of their sons, and keep them, at least, from want. Then they dance with a glee, to which the vivacity of French peasants is nothing; and indeed enjoy, with a much keener zest than we, all those pleasures that spring from thoughtlessness of the past, and carelessness of the future. Their intervals of leisure are precious; for to those who labour hard, idleness is perfect enjoyment; and to swing upon a gate all day, is a luxury of which people who have nothing to do can form no conception. After all, indeed, the great distinction between the very idle and the very laborious is, that the first lack leisure and luxuries,—the last, appetite and employment. Don't mistake, and suppose that I am the advocate of slavery. But yet

I am gratified when I can persuade myself, that a race of men which is found in this situation in almost every Christian land, is not without some little enjoyments, that sweeten the bitter draught of slavery, and prevent its being all gall.

Until they can be freed, without endangering the community, infringing the established rights of property, and rendering themselves even more wretched, it is some comfort to see them well treated by their masters. And wo, wo to the man who adds one feather to the weight they are destined to bear. He shall assuredly meet the vengeance of the Being who is all mercy to the weak and the ignorant,—all justice to the wise and the strong. Wo to those who, tempted by avarice, or impelled by vengeance, shall divide the parent from its offspring, and sell them apart in distant lands! A cruel and inhuman act;—for it is seldom we see the ties of kindred or of conjugal affection, stronger than in the poor negro. He will travel twelve, fifteen, or twenty miles, to see his wife and children, after his daily labour is over, and return in the morning to his labour again. If he becomes free, he will often devote the first years of his liberty to buying their freedom;—thus setting an example of conjugal and parental affection, which the white man may indeed admire; but, it is feared, would seldom imitate. Farewell.

## LETTER XII.

DEAR FRANK,

I HAVE now plenty of leisure of evenings; for Oliver has lately buried himself in Monsieur Cuvier's Golgotha, where he appears to be making a mighty shaking among the dry bones. It will probably not be long before he comes out upon me, with a head full of fossils, bones, and petrifactions, philosophizing upon them, as Hamlet moralizes upon poor Yorick's skull. In pursuing these studies he generally leaves me to myself, and my amusement is then to write you just what is uppermost. You must, therefore, forgive me, if I write without connexion, and sometimes put you out of patience.

If I remember right, I left off my last somewhere about the foot of the Blue Ridge. After this our ride lay along the banks of the Shenandoah, which commences its course northwardly, close by where some of the branches of James river begin their course to the south. They divide the waters of this great valley between them, and bear them through the Blue Ridge, the first in conjunction with the Potomac, the latter by itself. It was a pleasant ride along the foot of the mountain, sometimes crossing the little river, at others trotting on its banks, skirted with lofty elms. To the right was the mountain, to the left the

far-spreading valley, spotted with fine farms, and bounded on the west by another ridge of blue hills.

In the days of classical romance or Gothic superstition, when every grove, and stream, and lonely hill was peopled by nymphs, river-gods, dryads, fairies, and other queer curmudgeons, some of them of tolerable reputation, and others no better than they should be, this fair pastoral region would have been all alive with these small people. But, in this age of stern philosophy, the sprightly gambols of imagination are repressed by the trammels of science, and these airy creations of fear or fancy chased from their wonted haunts by cross old fellows, who explore the country to look for stones and minerals, or spy out the proper location of a canal or rail-road. The rivers produce nothing but fish; the groves are only peopled with squirrels and woodpeckers; and the mountains contain no beings allied to poetry or romance, but the wild deer, and the huntsman equally wild.

The only authentic account of the appearance or agency of a fairy in our country, which I have ever met with, is in a letter in my possession, which I cherish as a great curiosity. You may recollect that during the last war, there was a great scarcity of flints in our army, and that a learned physician and philosopher, of New-York, was deputed to go in search of them, in the state of New-Jersey, where it was reported they were to be found in great quantities. In the performance of this duty he encountered the singular adventure related as follows:

“Last summer, as I was searching for flints, along the banks of the Musconeconck river, which runs along the foot of Schooley’s mountain, a range stretching in a south-westerly direction through the state of New-Jersey, I was somewhat startled by the sudden appearance of a little old woman, of a very outre and singular appearance. She was crossing the stream on the back of a large turtle. Her height seemed about eighteen inches; her head was covered with a bubble of azure; her spectacles were of the purest chrysal water, which had assumed the consistency of glass; she wore a coat of mail made of the skin of a goldfish; her shield was formed from the shell of a pearl-muscle; her spear of a lobster’s whisker; and her buskins were of sturgeon’s nose, which being of incomparable elasticity, must have wonderfully assisted her in walking, when inclined to that wholesome and too much neglected exercise.

“The appearance of her face was not a little incongruous; and presented several interesting contradictions. Her hair was silvery white, apparently with age, while her face was that of a beautiful girl of sixteen, except that her eyes were of flint colour; her teeth of the finest red coral, and her lips of pale green. She guided the turtle across the wave with graceful negligence, the animal all the while singing melodiously in praise of fairy land. On reaching the bank, where I was standing in mute admiration, she dismounted from the turtle, who, making an ele-

gant bow, slid back into the water, and disappeared warbling the most delicious strains.

“As she approached me, for want of something else to say, I asked her, with all due deference, if she could direct me where I might find some good flints. ‘Flints?’ exclaimed she in a rage, ‘I’ll flint you with a vengeance!’ and thereupon her eyes, which I then first discovered were real flints, struck out actual sparks of fire, exceedingly bright and luminous. ‘Know, ignorant, presumptuous mortal,’ continued the old lady—‘that my name is Agathe Pyromaque’—the deuce it is, thought I, that is Latin for flints—‘and that I am the guardian of this haunted stream and yonder woody mountain, inhabited by millions of flinty-hearted damsels, who hate the very sight of man, and never forgive any rash mortal who violates their sacred recesses. Prepare then—but let me first ask are you married?’ I told her I had a wife and nine small children. ‘Then is there no hope for thee, thou egregious, uxorious monster. Prepare to suffer the penalty of thy rash intrusion, which is, to be petrified into a flint, and doomed to inhabit a tinder-box, for the space of one hundred and sixty millions of moons, having for thy companion a piece of steel, with which thou mayest amuse thyself by striking fire.’

“So saying, she approached me, waving her spear; she touched my shoulder, and already I felt the approaches of this terrible transformation. My teeth began to knock against each other, and at every blow, sparks of fire came out of my mouth and nose,

as if they had been blast furnaces, while my nails gradually assumed the appearance and consistency of gun-flints. At this awful moment, I recollected that I had in my pocket a preparation for accomplishing an almost instantaneous analysis of flint, and immediately sprinkled some of it over this diabolical damsel, who, in less than two minutes, separated into her constituent parts, chalk and limestone.

“Immediately the whole space of ether was animated by millions of flints, meeting in the air with horrible snapping, as if a hundred thousand triggers had been drawn at one and the same instant, and nothing was to be seen but innumerable sparks of fire, flashing and hissing about in a most extraordinary style. This tremendous uproar was heightened by a general discharge of all the guns in the neighbourhood, furnished with flints from this mountain, which went off simultaneously of themselves, doing infinite damage, but killing no one, as no enchantment has power over the life of man.

“When this confused uproar ceased, the air became calm and still. Again I beheld the serene sky bending down to kiss the mountain top, on which the last rays of the setting sun were playfully sporting, and the pure stream silently creeping its way, like a serpent through the green grass, reflecting in its transparent bosom one of the loveliest scenes in nature.”

There, Frank, I have taken the trouble of copying this curious letter, for the honour of the country, and

to show that our native solitudes are not so destitute of fairies as some people are pleased to imagine. I am determined to explore the Musconeconck the first opportunity, taking care to furnish myself with the doctor's nostrum for decomposing these mischievous and flinty-hearted damsels.

The only objects of sight or hearing, that recall to mind the sweet fables of yore, are the tall poplar trees about some of the farm-houses, and the answering echoes of the hunter's gun or stage-driver's tin trumpet. The poplars remind us of the sisters of Phaeton, (a great tandem gentleman in ancient times, who burnt the people of Africa all black by driving the chariot of the sun too close to the poor caitiffs.)—These were stiff, upright, slender tabbies, I'll be bound, and were changed into poplars on the banks of the Po, for criticising Diana at a tea-party. The echoes recall to mind the existence of that good-natured nymph, who, like a parish clerk, repeats all she hears, and says amen to every thing—an example of complaisance worthy the special imitation of the whole sex. I wanted Oliver to be a little romantic here, to keep me in countenance, but he has a sovereign contempt for poetic fictions, preferring those of the philosophers, which he affirms display more imagination than all the poets put together. When I talked to him of the transformation of the ladies on the banks of the Po, he only answered "Poh!"—for which I am resolved to make a great shaking among his dry bones, whenever he untombs them. For me—I delight in keeping up a good-

fellowship with all the airy, fantastic, and indefinite beings of former times. They are to me pleasant sort of people ; every beautiful spot of nature derives additional interest from being associated with them ; and in the dearth of real sources of pleasure, I am willing to cherish as many imaginary ones as I can. Sage moralists, and men of pious name, tell us that even the happiness of this world is all imaginary. Shall we then discard sources of enjoyment, because they are not real ? It is said, that the people of the United States are less tinctured with superstition of every kind than any other nation. They have discarded, it is true, the nymphs, the fairies, and the witches, but many of them believe in those delectable little tracts to be found in taverns and steam-boats, in which children are converted at four years old, and special interpositions of Providence are quoted to supply Lorenzo Dow with a pair of breeches, or Dorothy Ripley with a clue to find her bundle !

Whatever may be the imaginary, the greater portion of the real denizens of this part of the country are mere matter-of-fact Germans ; four-square, solid, and deliberate smokers, as e'er put pipe in mouth, or carried a tin tobacco-box. They are of the genuine useful class of people, who make two dozen ruddy blades of clover grow where never a one grew before—who save all they make—work harder and harder, the richer they grow ; speak well of the government, except when the taxing-man pays a visit, and pay their trifle of assessment with as bad

a grace as any people you will see in a summer's day. It is singular, what a difference there is between these and the Tuckahoe. The latter is a gallant, high-spirited, lofty, lazy sort of being, much more likely to spend money than earn it, and who, however he may consume, is not very likely to add much to the fruits of the earth. People are very apt to judge of themselves by a comparison with others, and the Tuckahoe, feeling himself so greatly superior to his slaves, is inclined to hold every body else equally his inferior. This sense of imaginary superiority is the parent of high qualities, and prevents the possessor very often from indulging mean and contemptible propensities. Pride, indeed, is a great preserver of human virtue, which is often so weak as to require the support of some prop less pure than itself. Hence it is, that the pride of family, and the sense of superiority, when properly directed, are the parents of high heroic characteristics, just as when improperly directed they are used as licenses for every species of debauchery, and justifications for every breach of morality and decorum. To minds properly constituted, the reputation of a father is a spur to excellence, a conservator of virtue; but to petty intellects, it is a mere diploma of folly and impertinence. The last think, because they were hatched in the eagle's nest, they must, of necessity, be young eagles, whether they take their lofty flight in the regions of the stars, or wallow in puddles with geese and swine.

The Tuckahoe of the better sort is a gallant, gene-

rous person, who is much better qualified to defend his country in time of war, than to enrich it in a period of peace. He is like a singed cat, and very often takes as much pains to appear worse than he is, as some people among us do to appear better. In short, the Tuckahoe belongs to a class of beings, among whom, in times of great danger, when the existence of a people is at stake, will be found the men who will be most likely to save or sink with their country. It is not often that the best citizens make the bravest soldiers.

But Mynheer Van Schimmelpenninck, or Vander Schlegel, he is the man of saving grace—that is, he saves something every day, and considers he has lost a day when he has not saved a penny. He has few or no slaves, and those he has, work with him side by side, in the fields. This creates a sort of good-fellowship between them, that the people of the other side of the mountain would consider degrading. In general, however, these people, like our farmers, cultivate their own grounds with their own hands, and consequently a large family is one of their greatest blessings. Aware of this, the good *yffrow* bestirs herself manfully night and day, and in a few years a race of lusty *bushwhackers* reward the labours of the industrious pair. The boys work in the fields when they grow up, and the girls do the housework. Now and then a young Daniel Boon, smitten with the ruddy regions towards the setting sun, *starts* for the western country, and founds a new race of Vander Schlegels, or Van Schimmelpennincks. In

general, however, they are not much given to change, except as led along step by step, by the course of the valley. When folks set out to go any where in this country, it is called *starting*. Thus they start to the westward—for our people are the most active in the world, and do every thing by a start. Other people *set out*, as they term it, and will pause and ponder, and ponder and pause half a life, over a journey of twenty miles—while an American decides at once, on going from the province of Maine to the banks of the Missouri. We are young quails, and run from the nest with the eggshell on our backs.

In almost every part of the United States where I have chanced to be, except among the Dutch, the Germans, and the Quakers, people seem to build every thing *ex tempore* and *pro tempore*, as if they looked forward to a speedy removal, or did not expect to want it long. Nowhere else, it seems to me, do people work more for the present, less for the future, or live so commonly up to the extent of their means. If we build houses, they are generally of wood, and hardly calculated to outlast the builder. If we plant trees, they are generally Lombardy poplars, that spring up of a sudden, give no more shade than a broom stuck on end, and grow old with their planters. Still, however, I believe all this has a salutary and quickening influence on the character of the people, because it offers another spur to activity, stimulating it not only by the hope of gain, but the necessity of exertion to remedy passing inconveniences. Thus the young heir, instead of stepping into

the possession of a house completely finished, and replete with every convenience—an estate requiring no labour or exertion to repair its dilapidations, finds it absolutely necessary to bestir himself to complete what his ancestor had only begun, and thus is relieved from the tedium and temptations of idleness.

But you can always tell when you get among the Dutch and the Quakers, for there you perceive that something has been done for posterity. Their houses are of stone, and built for duration, not for show. If a German builds a house, its walls are twice as thick as others—if he puts down a gate-post, it is sure to be nearly as thick as it is long. Every thing about him, animate and inanimate, partakes in this character of solidity. His wife is ever a jolly, portly dame—his children chubby rogues, with legs shaped like little old-fashioned mahogany bannisters—his barns as big as fortresses—his horses like mammoths—his cattle enormous—and his breeches surprisingly redundant in linseywoolsey. It matters not to him, whether the form of sideboards or bureaus changes, or whether other people wear tight breeches or cossack pantaloons in the shape of meal-bags. Let fashion change as it may, his low, round-crowned, broad-brimmed hat, keeps its ground—his galligaskins support the same liberal dimensions, and his old oaken chest and clothes-press of curled maple, with the Anno Domini of their construction upon them, together with the dresser glistening with pewter-plates, still stand their ground, while the baseless fabrics of fashion fade away, without leaving a wreck

behind. Ceaseless and unwearied industry is his delight, and enterprise and speculation his abhorrence. Riches do not corrupt, nor poverty depress him; for his mind is a sort of Pacific ocean, such as the first navigators described it—unmoved by tempests, and only intolerable from its dead and tedious calms. Thus he moves on, and when he dies, his son moves on in the same pace, till generations have passed away, without one of the name becoming distinguished by his exploits or his crimes.

These are useful citizens—for they bless a country with useful works, and add to its riches. But still, though industry, prudence, and economy, are useful habits, they are selfish after all, and can hardly aspire to the dignity of virtues, except as they are preservatives against active vices. Industry is a good citizen, but a bad soldier; and, in the present state of the world, every country requires brave defenders. People, whose minds are ever intent on the cultivation of the earth and the lucre of gain—on whom no motive operates to spur them to the pursuit of knowledge, or of glory, however they may contribute to the wealth of a state, will add little, I apprehend, to its physical strength in time of invasion. They will stipulate for security of persons and property, and be content to change masters. They will contribute largely to the actual wants, but will seldom, if ever, do much to adorn and embellish a nation. They are eminently useful—they deserve our respect, because they constitute the solid capitalists of the nation; but they require others to defend this

wealth when the danger comes, and ought not to look down with contempt on those who are not so laborious, but more brave and enterprising than themselves. These, by their active qualities, by their intellectual exertions, give a character of splendour and dignity, without which, indeed, a nation may become rich, but can never be either free or admired long. The one may be compared to the rough, solid, and unostentatious material which constitutes the foundation of the edifice; the other to the superstructure, where all the grace and beauty is displayed to the eyes of the beholder. Without the one, the building could not stand; without the other, it would neither afford shelter, or excite admiration. Let them love each other, therefore, since they are parts of one harmonious whole, and tolerate those differences, which are essential to the cement of that society of which they are equally useful constituent portions.

We stopped to breakfast at one of those traveller's rests, common in this part of the world, where they receive pay for a sort of family fare provided for strangers. The house was built of square pine logs, lapping over at the four corners, the interstices filled up with little blocks of wood, plastered over, and whitewashed very neatly. Before the establishment of sawmills it was cheaper and less laborious to build in this manner than to bring boards from a great distance. When new, these houses are very comfortable, but as the plaster falls out, the spaces afford shrewd harbours for vermin, as I sometimes found

to my cost. Every thing about this house was in a style of comfort and easy competency. The females got breakfast for us, and presided at the meal. They were a mother and daughter; the former a jolly, comfortable, middle-aged dame—looking like a special “breeder of sinners”—and the latter a neat-looking little girl, whom the mother called out of a small log-house, where she was weaving. A loom is an appendage to almost every farmhouse in this district of country—and the daughters generally officiate as weavers. The daughters of the Tuckahoes are all young ladies; those of the Cohees only girls. After breakfast, being in no hurry, we chatted with these good women, who were full of simplicity as well as curiosity. As we treated them with decent homespun courtesy, which all feel and understand, we soon got well acquainted.

In the course of the conversation, the little girl complained that she was not only obliged to weave for the whole family, but to milk the cows, churn the butter,—pull the flax—and sometimes, when rain was looked for, to help make hay. “I want father to buy a black woman,” said she—“but he says they are more trouble than they are worth, so I suppose there is no help for it, and I must keep on working till I am tired to death. The Tuckahoes never pull flax, for I was over the mountain the other day, and they told me so.” The good woman could not resist the desire of showing off her daughter’s accomplishments—it was her only daughter—and what mother could? She carried us into the best room, which

is always kept dark to keep out the flies, and was literally festooned with short gowns and petticoats hanging all round. These, I suppose, constituted the little girl's fortune, and certainly a very respectable dower, in chintz and striped linseywoolsey. The mother here displayed, with eyes that would have sparkled if they could, a little basket made with bristles by her daughter, which was very ingenious and very pretty; and if it had not been either, we would have praised it—for foul befall the churl who would check the honest feelings of an honest mother. Over the mantelpiece of this room was a fowling-piece and the broad antlers of a deer, the trophy of the youngest son, a lad of sixteen.

We left this place and went on towards Weir's Cave. In bidding good by, the honest dame told us she hoped we would return that way again. This is the frontier line of country politeness, and assures one of a welcome. Good by.

## LETTER XIII.

DEAR FRANK,

NATURE or education, or that mysterious influence, whatever it may be, which inclines the human mind to certain pursuits, and fits it to derive enjoyment from the contemplation of particular objects, has made me a great admirer of mountain scenery. Whether it be the silence and solitude that reign in these lofty regions, which naturally calls the imagination into action, or the magnitude of the objects everywhere presenting themselves to the eye; or the vivifying elasticity of the air we breathe, that, separate or combined, produce in me the sensation of elevated pleasure, I neither know, nor do I much care. Let philosophers analyze their feelings, while I content myself with feeling, without philosophizing. You, I know, have never been among the mountains; for I remember your father, the worthy alderman, had an idea there was nothing worth seeing out of the great cities. He sent you from one to the other, with store of money and recommendations, to see mankind, without being aware that the politer sort of people in cities, are, like mould candles, all of a size and shape, and taking the same number to the pound. He thought the whole world could be seen at the coffee-house.

For this reason, and because I delight to recall and arrange the impressions I derived from the scene, I will sketch a mountain landscape for you, without caring so much to administer to your gratification as to my own. I am now in the very midst of that great congregation of hills, comprising all the spurs, branches, knobs, and peaks, of the great chain which has been called, with a happy aptitude, the backbone of America. From the window where I am now writing, I can see them running into each other, as when we lock our fingers together, exhibiting an infinitude of various outlines ; some waving, others rising in peaks, and others straight for many miles. Everywhere they are covered from top to bottom with every various shade of green foliage ; except that here and there a bare rocky promontory is seen, crowned at its summit with pines. As the clouds pass over, an infinite succession of light and shadow is produced, that occasions a perpetual variety in the combinations of scenery. The sides of many of the ridges are, at intervals, ribbed with forests of pine, the deep foliage of which fringes the rocky projections from the foot to the summit, broad at the bottom, and ending in a point. Between these projecting ribs, in the deep glens, is seen a motley host of forest trees, all green, but all different in proportion as they are exposed to the sun, or enveloped in the shade. In some places appear extensive patches of deep red or brown, where the trees have been set on fire, either by accident, or with a view to turn the side of the hill into pasture. It may, perhaps, be

owing to this practice, that one of the favourite Virginia reels is, "Fire in the mountains, run boys, run."

In traversing this mountain region, one of the first things that struck me was the solemn, severe silence which prevailed everywhere, and only broken, at distant intervals, by the note of the cock-of-the-wood; the chirping of a ground-squirrel; the crash of a falling tree; or the long echoes of the fowler's gun, which render the silence, thus broken in upon for a moment, still more striking. But if it should happen that a gust of wind comes on, the scene of repose is instantly changed into one of sublime and appalling noise and motion. The forest roars, the trees totter, and the limbs crack, in a way that is calculated to alarm the stoutest city tourist. You can hear it coming at a distance, roaring like far-off thunder, and warning the traveller to get into some clear spot, out of the reach of the falling trees. I did not see a tree actually fall; but in many places we were obliged to turn out of the road to avoid the trunks of immense oaks and pines, that had been blown down just before. Our good mothers think only of the perils of the sea; and give up a son for lost who becomes a sailor. But the perils of the land are far greater than those of the water; for there, whether in crowded cities or lonely mountains, it is the fate of man ever to be exposed to dangers, which often he cannot see, and often cannot avoid.

Yet, though the ingredients of mountain scenes are pretty much the same, wherever we go, there is a continued variety occurring in the combination of

the same materials of earth, water, wood, and rocks, that never tires. The prospect is always expanding or contracting: as you lose sight of an object on one side, another gradually opens in a different direction; and this continual change is the parent of endless diversity. From the tops of the mountains, whence you can see as far as the eye can extend, you descend into little narrow glens, hemmed in, on either side, by lofty bluffs, above which you catch the clouds passing, like shadows, no sooner seen than lost. Through these glens invariably winds a brook, or river, stealing or rushing from side to side,—striking first the foot of one mountain, and rebounding back to the other in regular meanders. The sides of these are sometimes skirted with narrow strips of meadow; and when this is the case, you may be pretty certain somebody lives near. The traces of impetuous torrents, now dry, or only displaying here and there a pool of clear water among the rocks, occur frequently, and sometimes form the road over which you travel. Little is seen of the traces of man, except the tracks of the road, or occasionally a column of smoke rising at a distance, which gives token of his being near, but which not seldom turns out to proceed from the unextinguished fire of a west country wagoner, who has, perhaps, encamped there the night before, or stopped to cook his supper.

Of living objects, we sometimes saw a covey of partridges, a cock-of-the-wood, or a ground-squirrel. Their tameness convinced us they were little acquainted with man, whose acquaintance, instead of

ripening into familiarity, produces nothing but fear. Occasionally we saw a litter of swine, half wild, which always snorted violently, and scampered into the woods as we approached; which convinced me they had some knowledge of our race, else they would not have been so frightened. In some few instances we came suddenly upon a brace of woodcutters, with a couple of hounds, which were employed in scouring the forest, while their masters were felling trees. In the solemn repose of the woods we could hear the echoings of every stroke of their axes at a great distance. They sometimes condescended to stop a moment to look at us; but often continued their work without deigning us that attention; for there is a pride in these woodmen that prevents them from doing strangers the honour to gape at them, as our fashionable well-bred people do. It sometimes happened that we found it expedient to inquire of them our way, when they always answered very civilly, and with much intelligence. In many places the only traces of human agency are the incisions of the sugar-maple, and the little troughs at the foot of the tree turned upside down, to wait the flowing of the sap in the spring. Where these trees are plenty in the mountains, a family will sometimes build a hut, and remain till the season of sap is over, to make sugar, which they do by simply boiling the sap in a common kettle. When the sap flows no longer, they return home. It is in this mountainous region that the Great and Little Bull, Cow, and Calf Pasture rivers, and indeed almost all

the streams rise, that find a common centre in James river; whose various veins pervade almost one-half of Virginia.

To one accustomed, so many years as I have been, to the racket of noisy towns, and to the bustle of business, of which I partook in no part of the profits, and consequently felt no interest; who basked in no shades but the shady side of the street, and only remembered at long distance the deep repose of nature, even the novelty of this scenery was delightful. To every being not bereft entirely of his soul's regalia, I should think it might afford a pure and salutary enjoyment. If he looks round, he will see many objects he has never seen before, or perceive the absence of many with which he has been familiar. If he be one of those to whom objects of sense are only springs to awaken the higher powers of the mind, he will feel and think as he has never done before. He will be led into reflections that, if they do not awaken his mind to the comprehension of new truths, will most likely open new and purer sources of pleasure, and more lofty subjects of contemplation. Activity and noise remind us only of this world: but silence and repose lead us to a world to come. Farewell.

## LETTER XIV.

DEAR FRANK,

AFTER riding a few hours from the honest Dutchman's I mentioned in my last, we came to *Weir's*, or *Wier's* Cave. It is near the river Shenandoah, which sweeps along close by the foot of the abrupt hill of limestone in which is the cave. The little town of Port Republic is within a couple of miles of this place. The proprietor of the cave is a Dutchman, and acts as cicerone to the visitors, who are attracted hither in the summer season in considerable numbers.

The entrance is on the east side of an abrupt hill, and within about a hundred yards of Madison's cave, which last has now ceased to be visited, in consequence of the superior beauty of *Weir's*. Before we set out to begin our subterranean tour, we equipped ourselves in a couple of old coats, which suit all sizes equally well, being made after a most accommodating fashion,—too short for tall people—too long for short ones,—but wide enough to fit any body. Oliver's was very much out at the elbows, and so long that, bating its waist, it looked not unlike the fashionable walking surtouts of the present day, that are almost as convenient as petticoats.

The opening of the cave is so low, that we were

obliged to crawl on hands and feet, which is no easy matter, with a candle in one hand. However, we followed our conductor's heels, obeying his directions, to take care of our heads here,—and mind our feet there. It is quite impossible to convey, by writing, any distinct or adequate idea of the beautiful variety of this silent, damp, and splendid subterranean scene. Every apartment is distinguished by stalactites of different forms, colours, and arrangements. In some, the roofs are studded with an infinitude of knobs, white as alabaster; in others they are of a yellow cast; and in others, the sides are incrustated with what conveys a perfect representation of yellow damask hangings, folded and festooned as regularly as in a drawing-room. In others, the sides and roofs are either wholly or in part sprinkled with a profusion of little sparkling gems, that glitter like diamonds, and give an indescribable splendour to the apartment. In one of the rooms is a petrification, which exhibits an exact representation of a fall of water of about twelve or fifteen feet, and which, I am satisfied, was once a real cascade. I could not help laughing in my sleeve, when I saw it, to think how the poor nymph of the stream must have been astonished, to find herself gradually turning, like Niobe, to stone.

Far into the earth, and nearly nine hundred yards from the entrance, is a grand vaulted chamber, ninety yards in length, and an arched ceiling so high that we could just distinguish it by the light of our candles, which by this time began to burn blue. In the centre of this chamber, and entirely distinct from the

walls, stands a snow-white pyramid, about fifteen feet high, which, viewed through the distance, and in the vague light, had most singularly the air and outline of a colossal statue in Roman robes. The delusion on first entering the apartment is complete; and as the figure stands thus awfully alone, in the centre of the earth, out of the reach of the busy hum of life, as well as of the roaring thunder, and the sprightly beams of the blessed sun,—it might pass for some pagan divinity chiselled a thousand years ago. But it is consecrated to a nobler spirit;—the room is called Washington's, and the column I have endeavoured to describe is known by the name of Washington's statue.

The honest Dutchman has given names to every room, and every remarkable object, which he repeats with great self-complacency, but not in the very best of English.—“Now dish I call Solomon's demble.”—“Dish I call Solomon's trone.”—“Dish I call Niagara falls.”—And “dish Lady Washington's barlour.” He seemed to take great credit to himself for the aptitude of these names; and some of them were not altogether misplaced. After penetrating the cave about nine hundred yards, we turned to find our way again to the regions of the living. Honest cicerone wanted to show us something else; but we had become excessively chilly, and fancied we began to breathe with less freedom than usual. To say the truth, I, for my part, was heartily fatigued with creeping and dodging about, among the damp and slippery rocks. The temperature of the air

without was that of summer, while that of the cave is uniformly, I think, about forty-five degrees, and withal excessively humid. In fact, whoever explores it, pays the full price of whatever gratification he may derive from remembering its beauties. I would especially dissuade all fashionable ladies from venturing into it, for they would display their ankles most certainly; a thing which, judging by the present mode of dressing, they are particularly desirous to avoid!

When at the last we emerged from this subterranean wonder, I felt, I dare say, pretty much as did the pious Æneas when he left the shades. I have been sunning myself ever since, and yet have not recovered my usual temperature. Sometime hence I shall recall this adventure with pleasure, and dwell with complacency on the beauties of Wier's cave, when its damps and difficulties are forgotten. Many things not pleasant in the present, are delightful in the past tense. Memory often deceives us as much in recalling the past, as hope does in anticipating the future. They are both great deceivers; but then they are agreeable cheats: while the present time, with all its blunt honesty, is often a very disagreeable sort of a companion. Oliver, who was in great hopes to gain some additional insight into the fashionable art of making worlds, by diving thus into the secrets of the earth, and expected at least to find a petrified reptile of some kind or other, came out in very much of an ill-humour. He observed, in a grumbling sort of way, that "the outside of the earth

was, like the outside of a pretty woman, the best part of her; and he who looked further, generally got his labour for his pains."

Being fatigued with our subterranean excursion, we agreed to remain all night with honest cicerone, who keeps quite a comfortable house, from whence, in the stillness of the evening, you can hear the Shenandoah murmuring its way among the rocks. As we sat here in the twilight, talking over the past, and anticipating the future,—sometimes admiring what we had seen below ground, and then turning to the last rays of the sun as they rested on the summit of the mountain—by-and-by certain strapping fellows came up, one after another, followed by fox-hounds, and quietly took their seats where they found them vacant. They began to talk about matters and things in general, and at last fell into stories of killing snakes, and hunting deer in the mountains. Some of these were wonderfully romantic, and, no doubt, somewhat highly coloured; for people are very prone to be a little poetical, when they tell of what happens when nobody is present that can contradict them.

But mine host, the Dutchman, double-distanced them all in a snake story,—from whence I concluded he was what is called a double Dutchman,—that is, a Dutchman paternal and maternal. It took him at least three-quarters of an hour; for, like a true storyteller, he made the most of it, being doubtless the best story he had to his back. The snake was as *tick* as his *tigh*, and ran after him, bellowing just like

a calf of six months old—and *den* he came close up behind him,—and *den*, you may depend, he was scared ;—but *den*, for all *dat*, he turned round upon the snake *wid* his rifle, and fired right in his face, and kilt him, you may depend. Every body wondered at this story, and believed it, as in duty bound,—for he was their landlord, who kept the key of the whiskey, and was of course a person of consequence. About nine o'clock the club of story-tellers broke up, and quietly went their ways as civilly as they came. Not one of them offered to fight us for a mint julep ; nor did they insinuate any thing against gentlemen giving themselves such airs ; for we treated them civilly ; and in whatever part of this country I have been, I have always found I got what I gave. Our people scan the deportment of those who are better dressed than themselves with a deal of attention, and quickly detect any airs they may give themselves. If the stranger is inclined to treat them as if their coats were as good as his, they will fight for him, if necessary ; but it will sometimes go hard with him if he takes even such freedoms with them as they would quietly receive from their equals. Bullying, or airs of superiority, will do nothing but irritate our people, who are sufficiently acquainted with the world to know that a man's claims to importance are exactly in an inverse ratio to his pretensions ; and possess sufficient of the spirit of manly freedom to treat the insolence of a fine coat and an equipage with more severity than that of a beggar. The

difference between the people of a free state, and those of a despotic government, seems to be, that the former display their spirit by *bristling* up at those above, and stooping to those below; while the latter demonstrate their want of it by cringing to the rich, and trampling on the poor. The former will keep the middle of the road when a coach is coming, but will share it with a cart, while the latter will drive into a ditch to get out of the way of an equipage, and make themselves amends by running over the first beggar they meet. Despotic states are fine places for rich people to travel through; but then free ones are the refuge, and the paradise, of those who have no claims to distinction, except what they derive from their Maker.

It is this absence of all social servility which is so much the subject of ill-natured remark with the swarms of English tourists that infest our country from time to time. It is so different from their habits and experience that they don't know even by what name to call it, and mistake our comparative social equality for rudeness of manners. Brought up in habits of servility to those above them, and accustomed from their earliest youth to pay a deference to rank, riches, and station, independently of merit and virtue, they can form no conception of that natural feeling of independence which a different education and habits inspires. In their own country they see the lower orders servile to their superiors and brutal to those below them, and seem incapable of making the distinction between the manly frank-

ness of a free people, and the fawning servility of slaves. They bristle up at the approach of a man not so well dressed or so rich as themselves, and calculate to a fraction his claims to their civility, on the score of these indispensable requisites to polite treatment, before they compromise their dignity by condescending to be sociable.

This ridiculous affectation of superiority over those they are pleased to imagine their inferiors, is contrasted with a degrading sense of inferiority to those above them in rank, fortune, or station. They seem to have no idea of any intrinsic self-consequence, independent of the notice or patronage of their superiors, no sense of the true dignity of man; but are governed, it would seem, altogether in their estimate of themselves and others, by certain arbitrary and inflexible gradations in society, established by law or by long prescription, without resorting to any other criterion, by which to estimate the relative claims of mankind to reverence or respect.

Hence their insatiable desire, their unceasing efforts to climb into society, to effect an intimacy with those who are above them on the ladder of life. The leading object of ambition is to associate, almost on any terms, with persons of rank and title, and a visit from a lord or a lady, for ever ennobles a city wife, in her own estimation, while it excites the envy of her equals. If my lord or my lady chance to leave a card, it is sure to be displayed in a conspicuous situation to all plebeian visitors, and it goes hard, but the good wife manages to allude to it in some

way or other, on all occasions afterwards, as the great event of her life. It is handed down to posterity, and the very grand-children boast of the honour paid to their ancestors. Neither is it the vulgar alone that banquet on such delicate fare. This petty ambition pervades all classes and degrees, and there are families of the very first rank and consequence in England, which consider it their greatest glory to have given a dinner or a lodging to one of their sovereigns. If one of their ancestors had gained a great battle, and saved the state, it would not have conferred half the distinction. It is not only carefully recorded in the annals of the family, but even history does not think it beneath her attention.

In fact, Frank, it is this nice, and almost imperceptible gradation of ranks, the strictness with which it is everywhere enforced, and the abject submission paid to it, that constitutes, in my opinion, the *cement* of every monarchy. It is not without good reason then, that etiquette is considered of so much consequence in England, since it is an essential part of the system, and as grave a matter of state, as they are striving to make it at Washington, where it cannot but appear utterly ridiculous and out of place.

Deference to merit and high station, in my opinion, will always be voluntarily paid in a sufficient degree by all mankind, except a few of those worthless vagabonds, who are always exceptions to every general rule, unless the possessors of them, by their haughtiness, or their oppressions, forfeit their claim to the affections of the people. No one in this country

ever approached Washington with disrespect. This deference being freely paid by freemen, from the honest impulse of a warm and generous feeling, is worthy the giver and the receiver. When I meet a man I respect and admire, and offer him the precedence in entering a room, at the dinner table, or any where else, freely and voluntarily, I am ennobled by the courtesy. But it is quite a different affair when I am *obliged* to do it. Then I become an inferior, if I submit to it, and then the first seeds of slavery are implanted, in the consciousness or the acknowledgment of inferiority. Whenever, therefore, a system takes root in any country, founded on the absolute and hereditary right of one man to walk before another, or enter a room, or sit down to dinner, or do any thing, however immaterial, before his neighbour, the people are already half-enslaved by their habits, if not by their principles.

This system of gradation in the ladder of life is brought to great perfection in England, and its parts adjusted with the nicest exactness. They have *colleges* to decide on these important matters. "A saint in crape, is twice a saint in lawn," and a king ten times as wise as his minister, judging by the vast distance between them in the eye of etiquette. There the duke precedes the marquis in entering a room, going to dinner, or marching in a procession. Besides this, his mantle of state has "*four guards*," and his coronet has leaves without pearls! But even dukes have their degrees, and a duke of to-day, who should have the hardihood to go before a duke of

yesterday, into a dining room, would be considered an ill-bred monster.

A marquis, although "*most noble*," carries the badges of his inferiority to a duke, in his mantle of only "three doublings and a half," and his coronet of pearls and strawberry-leaves all of one height. An earl is only right honourable; his mantle has but three doublings, so that he is half a doubling inferior to the marquis, and besides this, his coronet has the pearls raised on points, with the leaves low between them. A viscount, though equally right honourable, has only two doublings to his mantle, and his coronet is only "pearled with a row of pearls close to the chaplet." A baron, too, is right honourable; but his inferiority to the viscount is demonstrated by a mantle with only two doublings, and a coronet with only six pearls. Thus you see, Frank, a man's claims to rank in England, are in a ratio with the doublings of his mantle, and the number of his pearls.

But this is not all. A duke may have in all places, except the king's presence, a cloth of state hanging within *half a yard* of the ground. A duchess may also wear a similar robe, and have her train borne by a baroness—if she can get one to do it. No earl—mark, Frank—no earl is allowed to wash with a duke, without the duke's permission. A marquis may have a cloak reaching within *a yard* of the ground, in all places, but in the presence of a king or a duke. His wife is entitled to have her train borne by a knight's lady, out of the presence of her superiors, and in their presence, by a gentlewoman. An earl

may also have a cloth of state, but only fringed, and with pendants; and his countess may have her train borne by the wife of an esquire, except in presence of her superiors. A viscount has no cloth of state, but is allowed to have a *cover of essay* held under his cup when he drinks; and his lady can only have her train borne by a *woman* in presence of her superiors. A baron may have the cover of his cup held under it while he drinks; and a baroness may only have her train borne by a *man* in the presence of her superiors. All these give place to each other, as a matter of course, in the order I have mentioned, except entitled by some office to precedency. Persons of the same titles are again arranged according to the date of their creation, which causes another distinction of the utmost importance to the happiness and consequence of the possessor.

You will perceive from this detail—which I have taken the pains to copy from an old book of the highest authority in the college of Lord Lyon, king at arms—how the spirit of personal independence is chastised into submission by these outward and visible badges of inferiority, which derive incalculable importance from habit and custom. Servility to superiors, together with a grovelling subserviency to those who can bestow on them the privilege of a cloth of state, or the right of turning their backs on those who before turned their backs on them, will naturally result from such a nicely graduated importance. Hence no one can go into titled society, without at once learning the relative rank of each

person, first by the arrangement of the point of precedence, and next by the anxiety of the small fry, to establish a propinquity with some titled dignitary. In fact, the lord or the lady who marches first at a coronation, has all the superiority over those that march at the other end, that the leader of a herd of buffaloes has over the rabble in the rear. So sensible are they of the influence of superior rank in England, that it has always been the practice of the house of lords, in all trials of peers, for the youngest peer, that is the peer of the latest creation, to give his vote first, and so on in regular gradation up to the highest officers of state. Nothing can more clearly indicate a consciousness of the existence and operation of a feeling of inferiority on the part of the mushroom lords, than this virtual acknowledgment of the danger of their yielding their consciences to their superiors in rank.

You will readily gather from this slight sketch, that it is next to impossible for these English travellers, who rail at the rude familiarity, as they are pleased to call it, of the people of the United States, to conceive the abstract idea of an independent man, or to tolerate, much less relish, the manly frankness of a republican freeman, who is utterly unconscious of the marvellous difference between a mantle of four folds, and one of three and a half. For my part I neither wonder at, or lament their misapprehension, and earnestly hope the day will never arrive, when our people will not be distinguished for their total incapacity to comprehend, what these gentlemen

mean by deference to rank and station, and the refinements of court etiquette. Equal rights and laws are as nothing, unless accompanied by an habitual sense of equality, and a determination to assert the dignity of personal self-respect, against any claims of hereditary distinction, or of superiority founded merely on prescription. The moment they suffer themselves to be bullied or laughed out of these genuine characteristics of liberty, they will be on the downhill course to degradation. They will be prepared to worship a mantle of "four folds," and bow down before a coronet of pearls. Adieu.

## LETTER XV.

DEAR FRANK,

WE are now at the warm spring, feeding most sumptuously on venison and mutton, and passing our time in an agreeable variety of eating, drinking, and sleeping—sleeping, eating, and drinking—and drinking, eating, and sleeping. The spring is in the bottom of a little valley, shut in by high mountains, and looking like the abode of the sylvan gods, the Oreades, and all the flat-footed nymphs of the mountains. The bath here is the most luxurious in the world; its temperature about that of the body, its purity almost equal to that of the circumambient air: and the fixed air plays against the skin in a manner that tickles the fancy wonderfully. About five miles farther on, are springs of still higher temperature, being from one hundred and two to one hundred and eight degrees. They are resorted to by people who have tried the warm spring in vain, for rheumatic and other complaints.

Oliver has already discovered, to a positive certainty, that this valley has been neither more nor less than the crater of a volcano; which is doubtless the reason why the waters of it are so warm. He has picked up several substances, that have evidently undergone the action of fire, whether from a vol-

cano, some neighbouring forge, or lime-kiln, I leave it to my masters, the philosophers, to discuss. For my part, I wish them success, in their praiseworthy attempts to find out how the world was made; for as *knowledge is power*, we shall then doubtless have several new worlds created by these wise people, free from all the faults and deficiencies of the old one. I am sure if a volcano, or a comet, is necessary to enable them to come at the truth, I am the last man in the world to deny them a trifling matter of this sort. A carpenter requires axes, saws, hammers, and chisels, for building a house; and certainly a philosopher is entitled to tools corresponding to the prodigious magnitude of his undertaking. If they wanted fifty volcanoes, and a hundred comets, they might have them and welcome for all me; provided the volcanoes were fairly burnt out, and the comets would pledge their word of honour not to return till the time foretold by Newton.

The warm spring is principally used as a bath, although people occasionally drink, and cattle are, in a little time, very fond of it. Indeed, the instinct of animals has led us to some of the best remedies in the world; and I understand all the salt licks, and many of the medicinal springs, in the western country, were originally indicated by the concourse of wild beasts to those places. I drank of this water, but it created an unpleasant sensation of fulness in my head and eyes. The bath is about thirty feet in diameter, forming an octagon, walled two or three feet above the water's edge; the bottom covered

with pebbles, and the water so pure, that if it were only deeper, one's head would turn in looking down into it.

I shall keep my remarks on the amusements, or rather want of amusements, modes of killing time, and habits of living at this place, until I have seen the other springs, which I purpose to visit; when I will *lump* them all together, and much good may they do you, my honest friend. All I shall tell you at present is, that I killed a rattlesnake this morning, and despoiled him of fourteen rattles, which I shall keep as trophies. These fellows are by no means common; though they tell stories of places in the mountains, where nobody but hunters ever go, where there are thousands. They are formidable dogs; and certainly, bating their being serpents, are pretty decent reptiles; for they never retreat, are never the first to attack, and always give the enemy fair notice before they commence the war. You know it is fair to give even the d—l his due; and why not a rattlesnake, which always puts one in mind of him?

I hear all the dogs of the establishment in an uproar, and have no doubt but Oliver's pet is at his old tricks.

## LETTER XVI.

DEAR FRANK,

MY last letter\* came to an untimely end, for reasons I therein gave, and which I hope proved satisfactory. I was always of opinion, that a man that had nothing to say, had better say nothing; and that when he has written himself out, he had better lay up the stump of his pen, and make verses to it, as Cid Hamet Benengeli did, when he had finished the renowned history of Don Quixotte de la Mancha. I hope these opinions are to your liking; but if they are not, it is all the same to me; for I am one of those people, whose opinions are settled the more firmly, like sand-bars, by the opposition of the currents.

We left the warm springs for divers good reasons. First, the venison began to run short:—secondly, there were no pretty ladies; and Oliver cannot live without them—and, thirdly, we were tired; for there is a desperate monotony in all watering-places, that I should suppose would render them intolerable to every body, except invalids and bachelors, who don't know when they are well off, and want to get married—young ladies in the *qui vive*—and married people tired of home and happiness. For my part, I think a man who goes to a watering-place to get a wife,

\* Omitted—Ed.

deserves to be—married; a crime which, as Sir Peter Teazle says, “always brings with it its own punishment.” I must, however, do the people of Virginia the justice to say, that they have better reasons for visiting the springs than most folks, since they do it to avoid the climate of the low country, which, in the months of August and September, is often unhealthy.

We left the warm spring late in the afternoon, intending to sleep at the hot springs, about five miles distant, but were not able to procure lodgings as we expected. We therefore pushed on for a house about ten miles off, where we were told we might be accommodated. It was sunset, in the depth of these valleys, when we passed the hot springs; and, long before we got to the place of destination, night overtook us. But it was bright moonlight, and we jogged on without difficulty, between two high mountains, approaching close to each other, and only separated by a narrow verdant bottom, through which a little brook meandered quietly along. The scene was worth a description; but, as we were both tired and hungry, you must excuse my being particular.

After “travelling, and travelling, and travelling,” as the story-books say, we came at last to a stately two-story house, which we could see by the moonlight, was magnificently bedecked with old petticoats stuck in the window panes. It stood on an eminence, by the road-side, at the foot of which ran a little brawling river, whose murmuring we had heard at a distance. We alighted and knocked at the door of this castle of desolation; when out came, not a

dwarf, but a giant at least seven feet high. He took our horses, and we went into the house, where the rest of this family of giants, seven in number, were seated round a table loaded with a mighty supper of bread, meat, and vegetables, not forgetting the bacon. Two women, of the like enormous stature, were waiting on the gentlemen. Hereupon, at sight of this most picturesque group, all the stories I had ever read of people being killed, wounded, and thrown into a ditch, in traversing lonely heaths, or desert mountains, rushed upon my memory. I fully determined to look at the sheets to see if they were not bloody, before I went to bed, and gazed round the room with infinite solicitude. At each recess of the fireplace was a bed; and the rest of the furniture, though carelessly arranged, was decent and comfortable enough; but I did not like the looks of three or four rifles, displayed rather ostentatiously over the chimney.

The group round the table consisted of an old man, whose countenance, to say the honest truth, was not quite so amiable as one might see of a summer's day—and six young fellows, that looked as if the forest itself would bow before them—if they were only armed with axes. These are the lads to go in front of the great caravan of man, in his progress to the west—to clear the lands, to hunt the deer, to war against the wild beasts, and cope with the savage, equally wild. But, as I said, my head was full of robbers, and I listened to their talk with great interest. It turned upon the day's work they had just gone

through, and of the task of the morrow, when they were going to reap a field of oats—and at once all apprehensions subsided. The industrious farmer, even in the wildest recesses of the mountains, is ever a harmless, honest being, with whom the lonely stranger may eat, and drink, and sleep in safety. The hope of gain is, with him, but a gentle impulse, which leads to the violation of no law, the commission of no crime—to attain the object. The dews, the showers, and the sunshine of Heaven, are the sources of his prosperity; and thus is he ever led to a feeling of dependance on the bounties of Providence, by his interest being more closely connected with those operations of nature, which lead us directly to a contemplation of the Deity. No wonder, then, that the cultivators of the land are those who constitute the real wholesome strength and virtue of every civilized country; since they daily look to the Heavens and to the earth alone for their support—and consequently feel their dependance on the one, and their inseparable connexion with the other.

I slept without even dreaming of robbers; and, in the morning, we got up before sunrise, having fourteen miles to ride to breakfast. The country through which we were now passing, is very near the summit of the great ridge of mountains which divides the waters that run to the east from those that run to the west. We were now, consequently, on the highest land between the Atlantic and the Mississippi. At Dennis Callaghan's, where we breakfasted, there is a little stream which joins James river, and event-

ually mingles with the Atlantic ocean, and a few miles beyond there is a similar one which is tributary to the Mississippi. Here, then, resides the mighty river-god of the Alleganies, who carries an urn under each arm, from one of which he pours the waters of the east, from the other those of the west. My mind expanded as it floated rapidly like a light canoe down the rivers, one moment dwelling on the vast ocean, and then on that endless stream, whose innumerable tributaries, like veins and arteries, there find their common centre, in the heart of THE GREAT VALLEY, forming natural links, and bonds of common union, which will for ever remind the people of that vast region of their kindred blood and kindred interests. I wanted Oliver to sympathize with me in these notable cogitations; but he had heard of a parcel of oyster or muscle shells, bedded in a rock somewhere in this neighbourhood, which made his hobby-horse to caper, and curvet, and kick at such a rate, that he could attend to nothing else. I wish to Heaven these shells had staid where they belonged, and not got into situations to puzzle the philosophers as they do.

But I must not forget honest little Dennis Callaghan, who is neither muscleman, nor oysterman; and at any rate, would much rather have the inside of an oyster than its shell, I'll swear for him. Dennis is a sort of old man of the mountain, as well known in these parts as Dennis Bulgruddery was on Muck-slush Heath. He is an Irishman, honey, true blue, pluck, liver and lights, midriff, and all; and settled in

this place about the time the oyster-shells did, I believe, for the memory of man runneth not to the contrary of his being here. How he got here, no one knows; but here he is, and here he is likely to remain, and flourish, for no traveller passes *his* door without calling; either because it is the only house of entertainment for many miles, or because Dennis is a most pestilent wag, and withal a very honest fellow, which, for a publican, is prodigious. He may be known by being a little fellow, dressed in a long swing-tailed coat with buttons about the size of a pewter plate; a pair of breeches, made very loose, for reasons which I shall keep to myself, ornamented with knee-buckles of massy workmanship, and four-square, or near about—I won't be positive. He has a mighty way of pulling up his galligaskins with one hand, and drawing the sleeve of the other across his nose at the same time, I suppose because it tickles him. His stockings were of mixed woollen, and had in them a pair of small, jolly, short, long, thick, spindle legs, that precipitated themselves into his shoes by means of two feet at the end of them; which said feet were rather short, but made up in breadth what they wanted in length. He wears a queue of some two or three dozen hairs, which in their primitive institution seem to have been black, but are now like Hamlet's Senior's beard, "a sable silver." As Dennis will doubtless be remembered by posterity, I thought it well to be particular in giving a description of him, which will become valuable as he shall become extinct.

We inquired of Dennis, if we could get breakfast, being pretty sharp-set with a ride of fourteen good honest long miles. "Breakfast!" said he, with infinite gravity—"you can't get breakfast here, I don't keep tavern any more." "However," said he, after enjoying our perplexity—"I am just going to breakfast myself, and you are welcome to go snacks." In a little time we had an excellent one; and, when we were going away, Oliver very gravely thanked him for his hospitality, without offering to pay. This made Dennis look rather blue, for he thought it was carrying the joke a little too far. However, we paid him, at length, in silver, at which he expressed no small astonishment, not having seen any in a long time.

We got to the white sulphur spring to dinner; and, as drinking the waters was one of the principal objects of my journey, we shall probably spend some days here. Good by.

## LETTER XVII.

DEAR FRANK,

THE other morning, after breakfast, Oliver and myself rode to the summit of the warm spring mountain, accompanied by General Le Fevre Desmonettes, a French emigrant, who left France in consequence of the failure of Napoleon's last effort to regain the throne. He was afterwards permitted to return to France, but was lost in the Albion, on the coast of Ireland. The general is about my age, and though covered with wounds, and condemned to death, is active in body and lively in spirits. He entered the army at the age of sixteen, and has ever since been in hard service. "I should like to return to France," said he, one day, "if France remains at peace; but I am tired of war, and never wish to lead armies again, except on parade."

It had rained in the night, and cleared up with a fine westerly breeze, producing that pure transparent atmosphere, through which nature appears to such advantage. The mountain is one of the highest of this region of mountains, and as we sat on a steep rock, which lays, as it were, loose on the summit, we overlooked a sea of hills, extending as far as the eye could reach, and running in a thousand various directions. We fell into conversation about France,

that interesting country, whose gay vivacity has often made Europe smile, and whose ferocious enthusiasm has sometimes made it weep tears of blood. The general, who had been a prisoner in England, spoke of the senseless antipathy of that nation to the people of France, who, until the late revolution, neither felt nor expressed any great dislike to their less liberal and less polished neighbours and rivals. Now, however, the case is altered, he says, and the French nation, ever since the occupancy of France by British troops, pant for revenge of national degradation and wounded pride.

At the time when you and I received our first impressions of the nations of this world—and in truth it is not much different at present—all the books that usually fell into the hands of young or old, were of genuine English production. In histories we learned that the French never failed to violate their national faith, while the English as uniformly preserved it; that they were always beaten by the English by sea and land; or if they happened to gain a rare and solitary victory, it was always by dint of vast superiority of numbers. In plays, and poems, and romances, the Frenchman was almost always a swindler, a coward, a braggadocio, or a frog-eater, caricatured in the most ridiculous colours and dimensions. In short, the men of France were represented to be without principle, and the women without virtue; and if, on any occasion, some vice of John Bull, too glaring to be concealed, was

reluctantly confessed, it was always traced to an intercourse with France.

Whatever may have been the effect of these early readings on the minds of others, on mine they produced one directly at variance with that to which they usually give birth. I began at last to feel sorry for the poor Frenchmen, finding they were living on frogs and soup meagre, and always got beat so terribly by valiant beef-eating John Bull. I remember my brother-in-law used to amuse himself, and put me in a rage, by enumerating the many battles England had gained against France. For the purpose of defending the reputation of my Frenchmen, I sought for other histories, exhibiting the opposite side of the question, where I found the same circumstances related in a very different manner. The consequence was, that I began to think the people of France were quite as brave, and moral, and certainly almost as polite as those of England. As reflection matured, I traced the causes of these misrepresentations to the early fears and antipathies of England, which had no other way of preserving herself against the superior power of France, previous to the attainment of her naval superiority, except by implanting in her people a deadly, irreconcilable, contemptuous antipathy. Another consequence of the early discoveries I made, respecting the contradictions in historical records, was, that I lost all faith in history, and took to reading romances, as more amusing, and at least as true.

My good opinion of French people has not been

weakened by experience. The bloody scenes of St. Domingo and of France, have, within the last few years, brought crowds of Frenchmen to this land of the exile, and they are to be met with in every part of the United States. Wherever they are, I have found them accommodating themselves with a happy versatility, to the new and painful vicissitudes they had to encounter ; remembering and loving the land of their birth, but at the same time doing justice to the land which gave them refuge. They are never heard uttering degrading comparisons between their country and ours ; nor signaling their patriotism, either by sneering at the land they have honoured with their residence, or outdoing a native-born demagogue in clamorous declamation, at the poll of an election. Poor as many of them are, in consequence of the revolutions of property in their native country, they never become beggars. Those who have no money, turn the accomplishments of gentlemen into the means of obtaining bread, and become the instruments of lasting benefit to our people. Others who have saved something from the wreck, either establish useful manufactures, or retire into the villages, where they embellish society, and pass quietly on to the grave.

In their amusements, or in their hours of relaxation, we never find them outraging the decencies of society by exhibitions of beastly drunkenness, or breaking its peace by ferocious and bloody brawls at taverns or in the streets. Their leisure hours are passed in a public garden or walk, where you will see

them discussing matters with a vehemence which, in some people, would be the forerunner of blows, but which is only an ebullition of a national vivacity, which misfortune cannot repress, nor exile destroy. Or, if you find them not here, they are at some little evening assembly, to which they know how to communicate a gayety and interest peculiar to French people. Whatever may be their poverty at home, they never exhibit it abroad in rags and dirtiness, but keep their wants to themselves, and give their spirits to others; thus making others happy, when they have ceased to be so themselves.

This subject recalls to my mind the poor *Chevalier*, as we used to call him, who, of all the men I ever saw, bore adversity the best. It is now fifteen years since I missed him at his accustomed walks—where, followed by his little dog, and dressed in his long blue surtout, old-fashioned cocked-hat, long queue, and gold-headed cane, with the riband of some order at his button-hole, he carried his basket of cakes about every day, except Sunday, rain or shine. He never asked any body to buy his cakes, nor did he look as if he wished to ask. I never, though I used often to watch him, either saw him smile, or heard him speak to a living soul; but year after year did he walk or sit in the same place, with the same coat, hat, cane, queue, and riband, and little dog. One day he disappeared; but whether he died, or got permission to go home to France, nobody knew, and nobody inquired; for, except the little dog, he seemed to have no friend in the wide world.

There was another I will recall to your mind, in this review of our old acquaintance. The queer little man we used to call the little duke, who first attracted our notice, I remember, by making his appearance in our great public walk, dressed in a full suit of white dimity, with a white hat, a little white dog, and a little switch in his hand. Here, of a sunny day, the little duke would ramble about with the lofty air of a man of clear estate, or lean against a tree, and scrutinize the ladies as they passed, with the recognisance of a thorough-bred connoisseur. Sometimes he would go to the circus—that is to say, you would see him laying most luxuriously over a fence just opposite, where, as the windows were open in the summer, he could hear the music, and see the shadow of the horses on the opposite wall, without its costing him a farthing.

In this way he lived, until the corporation pulled down a small wooden building in the yard of what was then the government-house, when the duke and his dog scampered out of it like two rats. He had lived here upon a little bed of radishes; but now he and his dog were obliged to dissolve partnership, for his master could no longer support him. The dog I never saw again; but the poor duke gradually descended into the vale of poverty. His white dimity could not last for ever, and he gradually went to seed, and withered like a stately onion. In fine he was obliged to work, and that ruined him—for nature had made him a gentleman.—And a gentleman is the *caput mortuum* of human nature, out of

which you can make nothing under Heaven—but a gentleman. He first carried wild game about to sell; but this business not answering, he bought himself a buck and saw, and became a redoubtable sawyer. But he could not get over his old propensity—and whenever a lady passed where he was at work, the little man was always observed to stop his saw, lean his knee on the stick of wood, and gaze at her till she was quite out of sight. Thus, like Antony, he sacrificed the world to woman—for he soon lost all employment—he was always so long about his work. The last time I saw him he was equipped in the genuine livery of poverty, leaning against a tree on the battery, and admiring the ladies.\*

The last of the trio of Frenchmen, which erst attracted our boyish notice, was an old man, who had once been a naval officer in the United States service, and had a claim of some kind or other, with which he went to Washington every session, and took the field against Amy Dardin's horse. Congress had granted him somewhere about five thousand dollars, which he used to affirm was recognising the justice of the whole claim. The money produced him an interest of three hundred and fifty dollars a year, which he divided into three parts. One-third for his board, clothing, &c. ; one for his pleasures, and one for the expenses of his journey to the seat of government. He travelled in the most economical style

\* He was found dead in the outskirts of the city some years after the publication of this work, and his death was occasioned by a rouleau of guineas tied about his neck, which had produced apoplexy!

—eating bread and cheese by the way; and once was near running a fellow-passenger through the body, for asking him to eat dinner with him, and it should cost him nothing. He always dressed neatly—and sometimes of a remarkably fine day would equip himself in uniform, gird on his trusty and rusty sword, and wait upon his excellency the governor. There was an eccentric sort of chivalry about him, for he used to insult every member of congress who voted against his claim; never put up with a slight of any kind from any body, and never was known to do a mean action, or to run in debt. There was a deal of dignity, too, in his appearance and deportment, though of the same eccentric cast, so that whenever he walked the streets, he attracted a kind of notice not quite amounting to admiration, and not altogether free from merriment. Peace to his claim and his ashes; for he and Amy Dardin's horse alike have run their race, and their claims have survived them.

Now that we are on the subject, let me ask you if you ever saw General Pillet's account of his residence in England, where he was a prisoner? The general appears to be a great wag—and with a justifiable retaliation has completely turned the tables upon the English, by a sort of wholesale satire upon the nation. It is written in the very spirit of the English writings and reviews of French morals and manners, and is justifiable only on the score of retaliation. He says the prisoners in England have such short allowance from the government that they

devour horses alive; that the ladies of rank uniformly retire to a private room after dinner, and get tipsy, and are so awkward that they all seem born with two left hands! Poor Squire Bull, I perceive, is in a great passion, at being thus paid in his own coin; thinks it exceedingly ungrateful in the French, who are indebted to him for the recovery of their liberty, to buy such scandalous abuse; and even the Quarterly Review has the modesty to complain of this righteous retaliation. Nay, Frank, what is worthy of special note, several of our reviewers and celebrated scholars have discovered a feeling of most edifying indignation at General Pillet's abuse of England, such as they never exhibited when their own country was infamously calumniated. Good by.

P. S. I have not time to tell you how we got down from the mountain,

## LETTER XVIII.

DEAR FRANK,

IN my last,\* I unmuzzled my wisdom upon you in a speculation, which, if you have read with proper attention, you are at least as wise as you were before. This is more than can be said of every novelty; for there are many new discoveries that only increase men's ignorance, by overturning an old-established and respectable opinion, and substituting doubts in its place. For my part, what with chymistry, geology, and some other *improving* sciences, I am set fairly afloat, and begin to doubt, as Touchstone says, "whether ipse is he;"—whether fire, water, earth, and air, the good old constituent elements, are elements or not, and, finally, whether this earth was ever made at all. Poor Oliver is in a fair way of becoming an orthodox philosopher, at the expense of all other orthodoxy, I'm afraid. He may fairly be said to have a dropsy of the brain, for his head is as full of the Neptunian system, and every round pebble he sees furnishes new proofs of his theory; notwithstanding I tell him, there is no reason in the world, why nature might not make a round pebble as well as a square or three-cornered one. The earth

\* Omitted.—Ed.

and all the planets are spherical, and a round stone is no such mighty matter that people should make such a rout about it. "In Pythagoras's time, when I was an Irish rat," (which I can hardly remember,) they talked about these things just as much as they do now; every philosopher had his theory, and some of these fully equalled the present ones in absurdity—which is saying a great deal for them. The most notable of all was that of Anaxagoras, who held among other things, that the first animals were generated by heat and moisture, (which, by-the-by, have never been able to do these things since;) that air was the cause of the volition of stars; that the earth was a plane; that the sky was composed of stones, which explains the phenomenon of meteoric stones completely; that the sun was nothing but a red-hot iron as large as Peloponessus; and that the moon was only a great *Welsh* cheese, about the size of a cart-wheel.

But it is time to return to Virginia, of which I am become almost as much enamoured as Paul himself. I am now just on the western declivity of the Alleghany ridge; the little brook that runs close by the sulphur spring, joins Greenbriar river, which joins the Kenhawa, which joins the Ohio, which flows into the Mississippi, the great artery of the immense region that extends from nobody knows whence, to the Lord knows where. Our pioneers will soon find out though, if they keep on as they have done lately. I conversed the other day with a most intelligent gentleman, a member of the national legislature, who, the winter before last, was in Paris, and who is now just returned

from a journey up the Red river, of some two thousand miles of forest and prairie. The wandering Arabs were nothing to us, Frank.

The sulphur spring, where I am now, is much resorted to by persons who have a *touch of the liver*, as it is called, or who are afflicted with bilious complaints of any kind. It is situated in a pretty little glen, surrounded by hills on all sides; the air is too often loaded with fogs to be altogether to my liking, and the evenings and the mornings, even in the dog-days, are cool and refreshing. The visitors live in cabins built of square logs, whitewashed, and disposed in a range just on the skirts of a little lawn, so that they have all the air of a rural village. Whatever may be the virtues of the waters, he who wants to get a good appetite, and allay it too, will do well to come here, to eat mutton and venison. You gentry who get a saddle of mutton a month old, and then hang it up till its juice exhales, and it becomes "as dry as the remainder biscuit after a long voyage," don't know what venison is, when brought down from the mountains fresh. I am no great epicure, you know—that is, I neither like terrapins, tripe, beavers' tails, hog-fish, nor any other of the great dishes—but I confess to the Virginia venison.

There is plenty to eat here; but they give you very little time to eat it in. Just fifteen minutes, and the table begins to be cleared. For my part, I like to masticate before I swallow my victuals: so that, before I had half finished, some confounded Dr. Pedro Positive de Bodeill of a fellow, would whip off the

dishes one by one, and leave the dinner entirely extinct. It may be urged in extenuation of this haste, that people who drink plentifully of this water cease to be free agents, and must make the most of their time in eating. The visitors here are mostly invalids, either real or imaginary; if there be any such thing as imaginary sickness. It has always struck me as a great piece of assurance in one man to tell another that he was *hipped*, as the phrase is—as if a man was not a better judge of his own feelings than any body else can possibly be. For my part, I believe by far the most common imaginary complaint is that of fancying ourselves wiser than other people; and, under the influence of this species of the hypochondria, pretending to decide on their internal ailments. I am convinced that a person may suffer much, and yet the hours of health and sickness be so equally balanced, that, to the eye of an observer, nothing seems to be the matter; and thus the poor soul is deprived of sympathy, because he don't waste away and die.

The country people often stop heré to take a glass of the water, and I had opportunities of seeing numbers of them. They are much like the country people in all the remote parts of the United States, and appear at the spring, among the fashionable ladies and gentlemen, without the least embarrassment. There is a striking air of conscious independence about them, which, to me, is the finest characteristic of our countrymen, and gives assurance of long-continued freedom. At first, it seems

a little unpleasant, but reflection soon reconciles us to this proud badge of liberty. This feature of character is, perhaps, stronger in the south than elsewhere ; for where there are a great many blacks, it is, in itself, no small distinction to be white. In Virginia, too, the freeholders give their votes *viva voce*, in the presence of the candidates ; and this, doubtless, gives them a character of more sturdy independence.

Here, too, the hunters are seen coming down with their deer to sell ; for the mountains in this region abound with mighty hunters before the Lord, who cultivate a little land, and hunt a great deal. These are the people to make soldiers of ; for they endure more hardships, and encounter more fatigues to kill one deer, than would kill twenty of the stoutest *bucks* in all Christendom. In the morning, they are at their posts in the pathless mountains, in the depths of winter ; often all night out ; and often bewildered in these recesses for two or three days. They are patient of cold and hunger—but don't bear thirst well, and always carry a bottle of whiskey. It is an utter disgrace to one of these mountain spirits, to draw the blood of a squirrel in killing it ; they just hit the bark to which he clings, and bring him down by the shock, stone dead, without touching the body, or breaking the skin. An army of these fellows would march to the north pole, and shoot out the wind's eye, if it were no bigger than the point of a needle. I noticed one of these men last Sunday, down at the spring ; and such a lad you won't always

sec. He was at least six feet high; all bone and sinew, and had but one eye, which by the way was not in the middle of his forehead, else he might have passed for Polyphemus, in a hunting shirt. Whether his having but one eye was the consequence of an amusement said to have been fashionable hereabout, some years ago, or whether it was put out designedly, that he might take sight, without the trouble of shutting it, I am unable to tell; for I reckon the man that asked him might chance to get knocked down, with something betwixt a fist and a sledgehammer. He was followed by two dogs, lank and fierce, looking somewhat like their master—who, however, talked with a degree of manliness, intelligence, and decorum, that would have astonished people, who measure the fineness of a man's intellect by the texture of his coat. The fact is, that these people are not altogether dependant on hunting, but cultivate little farms—and there is, in the peaceful labours of agriculture, something that softens and harmonizes the heart of man, just as its influence ameliorates the climate, and smooths the rugged face of nature. This hunter told me he had a little farm, in a glen in the mountains, of which he was to have the produce of all he cleared to himself for three years—after which one-third was to be given to the proprietor. I believe these are the usual terms on which land is taken up in this region—where it is less valuable, because situated just between the navigable rivers, that centre in the Atlantic, on one hand, the Mississippi on the other, and a number of miles distant

from each. The roads, too, are inconvenient for wagons; and the produce of these little farms finds its principal market at the springs—which are an immense advantage to this country, not only by helping the people off with their surplus produce, but by their visiters affording such excellent examples of refined manners, and models for caps and cossack breeches. Good night.

## LETTER XIX.

DEAR FRANK,

IT is a rainy morning ; the mountains have all got on their nightcaps of mist, and the clouds have fallen far below their lofty summits. Deserted is the green lawn, before the whitewashed cabins of the sulphur spring, and not a soul is to be seen seated under the shade of the oaks, with book in hand, half-buried in sleep and sentimental reveries. What renders this confinement more irksome, I have just finished my last romance, and have nothing left but one of those little works, something between a novel and a sermon, in which religion and love are strangely jumbled together, to the great benefit of the former, no doubt. It is the production of one of the good ladies of mother England, whose fault it will not be if our young damsels don't admire a spruce young parson, who proses much, and does nothing beyond any other human being, and pant with unceasing fervour for a husband in a black coat.

In this predicament I shall follow the orthodox example of our good aunt Kate, who, whenever it is too stormy to go any where else, takes her work and runs over to spend the day sociably with her opposite neighbour, who wishes her at the bottom of the red sea. I mean to saddle myself on you

for the storm, and talk away without mercy, until it clears up as bright as the sun. My head is just now full of the future destinies of this noble young country, and I mean to empty it, destinies and all, if the rain only lasts long enough.

Before I visited this portion of the United States, I had heard much of the continued migration from the Atlantic coasts to the regions of the west. This, at that time, made little impression on me, for as Captain John Smith, of "renowned memorie," says,

' "For yet I know this not affects the minde,  
Which eares doth heare, as that which eyes do finde."

I have now had some opportunity of witnessing the magnitude of this mighty wave which knows no retrograde motion, but rolls over the land, never to recoil again. I have seen it in the progress of wagon-loads of men, women, and children, passing along the great roads leading to the westward, and in the deserted houses, whose former inmates have sought independence in the fertile regions along the Ohio, the Tennessee, the Mississippi, and Missouri. This progress of the human race from east to west, is one of those circumstances which has already had a great influence on the policy of this government; and in its further progress, by generating new states, and propagating new and growing interests, must, in a country where the majority always governs, sooner or later produce lasting and important effects upon the Union.

Many of the best writers on the affairs of the United States, among foreign nations, as well as the

majority of enlightened foreigners with whom I have conversed, have adduced this rapid extension of the limits of our settlements as one of the principal causes of our future separation into a plurality of empires. The number of states; the distance of the extremities from the centre of power, both resulting from this disposition to emigrate, will, as they affirm, weaken the confederation—because the one will multiply the chances of division, the other render a separation more easy. The Allegany mountains constitute the geographical division they point out between two of the great empires thus to be formed, and the region beyond, according to their prophecies, must inevitably fall off, like Taliacotius's nose, from the parent country on the Atlantic.

But foreigners, with few exceptions, however enlightened or profound, in my opinion are not competent judges on this subject. They may, indeed, speculate with some degree of certainty on the principles of the constitution, the influence of the laws, and the relative conflicts of the state and general government; but there are latent and moral causes, that operate unseen and unheard, escaping the attention of a foreigner, and eluding his research, like the peculiar graces of the language to which he can never attain. Before such a man attempts to decide on the probability of our separation, he should know the ties of interest and affinity that pervade every part of this country, and act in noiseless opposition to the little local feelings, which are rather subjects for good-humoured banter than serious causes of

antipathy, and operate like the temporary irritation of a virago, the more noisily for being unaccompanied with blows. He should also direct his attention to that union of intelligence, that parity of education, similarity of language, and general opinion, which subsists in no other country of equal extent, and of which there is no example in the history of Greece or Rome, the two great republican states, as they are called, whose fates are supposed to be applicable to our future destiny.

The common error of these political speculators is, the finding analogies in names, without proceeding to ascertain whether the constituent portions of the thing designated by the same name are not radically different. Thus all European philosophical politicians seem to me to have lost sight of the distinction between a representative republic, such as ours, whose first principles are as well defined as those of any other science, and whose practical operation is pointed out, and circumscribed with all the precision of written laws. The wild democracies of antiquity, sometimes swelling into lawless and unrestrained licentiousness, and at others submitting to a self-created dictatorship, are not to be compared to our sober, tamed, chastened, and restrained freedom, ever the same, because founded upon a constitution unchangeable, or changeable by a process so full of salutary delays, so embarrassed by saving debate and useful opposition, that the minds of the people and of their representatives have always time to cool, ere they can possibly decide on any important

alteration. In the ancient republics, tumult, rather than debate, decided great questions in the last resort; and such was the defective state of representation, that one-half the time the decisions of a senate were reversed by a mob. In fact they had no method of getting rid of an obnoxious ruler or an oppressive law, except by resorting to violence, that is to say, by dissolving the elements of the social compact, in order to give every citizen an opportunity of exercising an influence in the state by his physical force that was denied him in every other way.

Owing to the entire absence of any thing like a representative system in the ancient republics, and the marked distinction between the higher and lower orders, as well as between different tribes, there was always existing in them a majority of the people whose pride was wounded by a sense of inferiority, and whose passions were irritated by a restriction in the exercise or enjoyment of certain rights, civil or religious. No matter how insignificant these were, they were still sufficient to create two separate orders in the state—cherishing, on the one hand, contempt, on the other, jealousy; and thus placed them under the operation of one of the most irritable and one of the most arrogant passions of the mind. It was this distinction which produced the uniform opposition between the two orders of patrician and plebeian at Rome, that after vacillating for a time between oppression on one hand, and anarchy on the other, ended at last, step by step, in a confirmed tyranny.

To the absence of a complete and well-defined

representative system, after all, however, we may trace those ruinous conflicts of party, which, having no constitutional mode of decision, generally ended in a resort to bribery or force. The result of the former was universal corruption—that of the latter one of three things. The stronger party oppressed the weaker, and thus destroyed the equality essential to freedom; or it so strengthened itself, that it became the tyrant of the whole; or, in the event of the parties being equally balanced, one or other called in foreign aid, and both became subjugated by the power brought in to reduce one. If the interference of a foreign power did not do this, it vested a foreign influence in the state altogether destructive of its real independence. In this country we have a different way of settling our party disputes, without causing any breaches of the peace, but such as a peace-officer can easily repress; and without the aid of any foreign influence, except that of a few adopted citizens in some of the great cities, who cannot destroy the wholesome operation of the true American feeling. Let us then leave the examples of Greece and Rome to the philosophers, who write to show their learning, rather than to decide any great question of practical utility; the remainder to the little freshmen to make orations about for Saturday's exhibitions.

The danger of a separation of the Union, arising from the extension of our settlements and the multiplication of the states, being an apprehension not growing out of any examples drawn from the history

of the ancient republics, merits serious investigation. To my mind, however, these two circumstances present a result altogether different from that anticipated by foreign writers, and a certain class of domestic politicians. It appears to me that the danger of a separation of the states diminishes precisely in a ratio with the increase of their number and the extent of territory they occupy, until it arrives at a magnitude which I shall notice by-and-by. While the states were few in number, the combination of a majority for any purpose of separation or of resistance to the general will, was comparatively easy, because it is much easier to gain the few than the many. The probability of unanimity is, in general, proportioned to the number to be united, and it is much easier to get three to agree than three times three. It might be no difficult matter to induce two states out of three to combine for the object of separating from a third ; but when there are eighteen or twenty states, the probability of a majority uniting in an object of that nature is incalculably diminished. But even if a majority is inclined to a separation—and unless a majority be so inclined there is no danger of its succeeding—still the difficulty is increased by the utter improbability, that the majority of states so inclined should lie all adjoining to each other, without which geographical combination there would be no possibility of their forming one body politic. I consider this as a strong circumstance, because it is scarcely probable that a minority of the states will ever draw

off from the majority, however they may affect to desire a separation. The disadvantages resulting from such a measure to the weaker party are too obvious to need being stated.

There are but three causes I can conceive adequate to produce a rupture of a union so deeply rooted in the habits and attachments of the people. The first is, the adoption of a system of legislation such as has long been pursued in England, which places the pursuits and industry of individuals under the guardianship of the government, which thus, in a great measure, becomes the arbiter of every man's private affairs. This direct appeal to the selfish principle, which it is the great end of every government to render subservient to the social principle, at once enlists the personal interests of almost every man in the acts of his rulers, and of course excites his passions in every discussion of the public affairs, not because they involve certain principles, favourable or unfavourable to liberty, but that they affect his own particular private business. Where a system of legislation is confined to the protection merely of person and property, which, in my opinion, is all that any good government ought to aim at, it affects all classes of the community equally; the regulations are general and universal, and are, if properly devised, oppressive to none. They appeal but slightly to the selfish feelings, and excite no envy or heart-burnings, because their operation is uniform on all classes of the community.

But the effects of a system of legislation by which

government assumes the right of protecting any particular branch of industry, at the expense of all the others, are far different. It at once arrays the different classes of the community in direct opposition to each other, and appeals directly to the selfish principle, which, by this additional excitement, becomes too strong for the social. The operation of an exclusive encouragement to one class of industry is always felt to be more or less injurious, because it gives to one certain advantages denied to the others. It is in vain to tell these latter, that they will, in the end, by a circuitous route, receive their full share of them; they can neither see or feel the justice of the provision which, on the face of it, creates an inequality of rights and privileges. The individual engaged in a business which receives no share in the "protection" of the government, as it is called, compares his situation with that of one who does, and at once the latter becomes an object of jealousy. Instead of being looked upon as a friend and fellow-citizen, enjoying with him an immunity of rights, he is viewed in the light of one who has reaped advantages of which the others are not allowed their just share. In this way communities will be split into conflicting elements, which, instead of co-operating harmoniously in the general good, and strengthening the nation by their union, become rivals, and of course enemies.

In proportion as the nation is weakened by these conflicting interests, the government becomes strong, because it has at its disposal the individual interests of

all. When, by a single act, it can put money into the pockets of one class of the community, and take it from the others, it becomes the arbiter of the interests of the whole, and the people instead of minding their own affairs, and pursuing their own course, will be gazing towards the seat of power, watching its movements, and calculating their consequences to their individual prosperity. Principles are lost sight of in the miserable scuffle of rival classes, and the inquiry is, not whether the acts of government are in conformity with the fundamental principles of liberty, but whether they will put money in our pockets, or take it out. A sordid feeling will insinuate itself into the very heart of our system, and come in time to constitute the only basis of legislation, as well as the only test of good government.

The new and powerful excitements offered to the selfish principle, by this system of legislating on the private pursuits and individual profits of the different classes of labour, must of necessity render the struggles of party more violent and dangerous. Elections which are simply to decide whether my favourite candidate or yours is to be chosen, will excite only ordinary solicitude; it is a mere matter of individual preference of one man to another, and, unless we are holders or seekers of office, the decision does not in the least affect our personal interests. Our wishes are mild and easily controlled, and we cheerfully reconcile ourselves to their disappointment. But when the choice of any particular man, or set of men,

is to affect the individual interests of large and powerful bodies, whose prosperity or ruin may depend on the success of one, and the defeat of another, the struggle enlists some of the most irritable passions of our nature, and will be carried on with a violence, dangerous to the very existence of the body politic.

But this system of directing, controlling, encouraging, and protecting the industry of individuals, and thereby assuming the dispensation of good and evil, which belongs only to Providence, is incomparably more mischievous and dangerous in a confederation of states, like ours, whose union was founded on a basis of mutual interests, and will only last so long as this cement endures. Some of the states are almost exclusively agricultural, others have large interests invested in manufactures, and others more or less controlled by the mercantile class. Now it is very obvious, that a system of legislation which shall select either of these great interests for exclusive protection and encouragement, must of necessity rouse the opposition of those states whose interests lay altogether in a different direction. They will oppose it as a matter of course. If successful, they will put it down, and then the other interest, disappointed at being deprived of legislative patronage, will become equally discontented; if unsuccessful, they on the contrary will become still more disaffected, and retire from a confederation which they may think offers them no sufficient equivalent for the burdens it imposes.

If, in pursuance of this system of legislation, the

government should attempt to satisfy all parties, by offering equal protection and encouragement to each of their separate and peculiar interests, experience shows that such a course, instead of satisfying, displeases all. It is utterly impossible so to graduate and distribute this encouragement, as to stifle all complaints of partiality. Such a plan is beyond human wisdom to conceive, or human virtue to acquiesce in. The balance is too nice and critical to be adjusted by any other hand than HIS, who created and controls the universe, with all the little busy-meddling beings that mar his works when they attempt to mend them, and can only result in universal discontent. Events beyond the control of any government, are continually happening to disturb the balance of these discordant interests, however nicely adjusted, and by which one great interest will be depressed, while another is exalted. The former must then be screwed up by legislation and protection, to a par with its more fortunate rival, and thus they will go on seesawing up and down, never precisely on a level, and never quite satisfied. Thus the states will come in time to consider each other as enemies, rather than friends; as rival houses rather than partners in the same firm, and either fall off from each other, or hang so loosely together as to diminish, rather than increase the strength of our union. In my opinion a minute system of legislation, pimping into every man's private affairs, regulating every man's private pursuits, and graduating the profits of his business, is the very worst species of vexatious

tyranny ever devised. It is a despotism in disguise, though you may call it liberty if you will. Too much government, is like too much cold pudding—it will choke a dog, however hungry he may be. We rail at foreign governments for exercising their patronage in the corruption of a few powerful leaders; but a government that exercises the prerogative of appealing to the private interests of individuals of all classes, possesses the means of corrupting and enslaving a whole people. When the mighty pigmies of this mighty planet, undertake to usurp the prerogative of Omnipotence, by attempting to regulate the effects of causes over which they have no control, disappointment and misery are the just rewards of their presumption.

The second cause of disunion will be found in the slave population of the south. Whenever the misguided, or wilfully malignant zeal of the advocates of emancipation shall institute, as it one day doubtless will, a crusade against the constitutional rights of the slave owners, by sending among them fanatical agents, and fanatical tracts, calculated to render the slave disaffected, and the situation of the master and his family dangerous; when appeals shall be made, under the sanction of religion, to the passions of these ignorant and easily excited blacks, calculated and intended to rouse their worst and most dangerous passions, and to place the very lives of their masters, their wives and children, in the deepest peril; when societies are formed in the sister states, for the avowed purpose of virtually destroying the value of this prin-

cial item in the property of a southern planter ; when it becomes a question mooted in the legislatures of the other states, or of the general government, whether the rights of the master over his slave shall be any longer recognised or maintained, and when it is at length evident that nothing will preserve them but secession, then will certain of the stars of our beautiful constellation "start madly from their spheres," and jostle the others in their wild career. There is no dissenting voice in the south on this vital question, and the movement will be unanimous. Let the fanatics be checked in time in their mad career, if the union is worth preserving.

There is but one other cause I can conceive adequate to produce a separation of the states, and a rupture of the constitutional bond of union. It is, that the general government shall exercise its powers so as to trench on the rights of the state governments in a manner that shall be obvious to the people at large, and which they will feel, not only as a violation of their charter, but a personal insult and grievance. There is, perhaps, little danger that such a folly should ever be committed ; but should it ever be, it will most assuredly endanger the integrity of this noble and happy confederation. The impulse from the states in their separate characters ought and must give the tone to the general government—and whenever the latter attempts to stem the sentiment, it must necessarily fall, unless sustained by means immeasurably greater than it can at present command. But the truth is, I think, that the states are more

jealous of each other than of the general government, which, being a kind of protector of the rights of the smaller ones, is naturally looked up to by them as their legal guardian. From these plain and simple considerations it appears to result, that the multiplication of states, so far from endangering our system, will render it more compact and indissoluble. The more the merrier then; I hope the old states will bestir themselves, and beget a new one every year, till they become double the number of the original compact, and then we can have a stripe and a star for each—by counting both sides of the flag.

As to the extension of our territory, that is no ground of apprehension to my mind. One great cause of the downfall of the republics of antiquity, was the influence obtained by ambitious demagogues; and this was pernicious in proportion to the small sphere in which it was exercised. The influence of intellectual and moral qualities depends on the opinion of the people with respect to their existing in any distinguished individual. If they consider him as possessing not only the capacity but the inclination to protect their rights, and administer to the glory and happiness of the state, they will trust him. But the moment he unmasks any design against either, if the people are too numerous to be corrupted by his largesses, and too dispersed and distant to have been seduced by the fascination of his manners, or the allurements of his condescension, he loses their affections, forfeits their confidence, and becomes insignificant. A single demagogue may corrupt and enslave

a single city ; but a widely diffused republic like this, must have many demagogues, who will become rivals instead of coadjutors, and consequently be incapable of any general conspiracy against the rights of the people, or the safety of the state. Small states are liable to be overturned by an influence proportionably weak. The pebbles that collect on the shore are tossed about by the slightest agitation of the waters ; but the assemblage of rocks resists the force of the tide, and the rage of the elements.

I will slightly notice some circumstances peculiar to our country, which have a secret influence in keeping this nation united, and which make this country a striking exception to all others. Other great states have been created by the conquest and union of smaller ones, whose language, manners, religion, laws, habits, opinions, and civilization, were all different, and continued so long after their conquest. They remained for ever distinct in appearance and feeling, and never forgot that they belonged to different nations and tribes, animated by hereditary hostility from time immemorial. They had neither moral, political, religious, or intellectual affinities ; and were only kept together in nominal union by a military coercion. They resembled, to use a familiar illustration, a dry hide, of which you can only keep one corner down at a time. When the weight of military power operated in one quarter, and kept it in subjection, it rose in the opposite point ; and when it pressed upon the centre, the extremities were all up in arms. The consequence was, that the larger

these ill-sorted empires became, the weaker they waxed, and the moment of their extremest extension was that of their separation.

But it was our happy destiny to grow up and to increase as one nation, speaking, thinking, reasoning, believing, and feeling, with a degree of uniformity scarcely paralleled. Though there are varieties, there is still a great family likeness indicating a near kindred, and the exceptions are so few, as well as so dispersed, as to be incapable of any influence on the general mass. We grew up many states, but only one people. As we extend with the rapidity of a torrent, we incorporate with no adverse tribes, nor force any nation into an unwilling fraternity with those they hate. It is the same people, carrying with them the soul and the intellect of Americans—bearing the very nation on their shoulders wherever they go. Whether the emigrant travels to the banks of the Ohio, the Missouri, or the Mississippi; whether he comes from the north, or the south, he implants letters and civilization in the wilderness. The nation thus grows all of a piece; and the hardy settler, instead of incorporating with new people, and assuming their habits; or forcing them to incorporate with him; or gradually relapsing from his accustomed habits, only assumes the hardihood necessary to his new situation. One of his first cares, after having provided for the safety and the immediate wants of his family, is to see to the education of his children, that they may grow up like himself, even in the midst of the woods. Thus it happens, as it happens in no

other country, that in the remotest regions, and in the most profound wilderness, the traveller sometimes opens on a little log cabin, in a little clear field, where dwells a family whose education and manners differ nothing from his own, except in their superior intelligence and hospitality. He welcomes them at once as his fellow-creatures, not because they belong to the human species, but because he recognises in them those moral, intellectual, and sentimental traits, that act, like chymical affinities; everywhere the same; and everywhere unchangeable in their operation, and irresistible in their attractions. He shakes hands with them as his brethren, and lays him down to sleep in the midst of them as among his own blood.

Thus every extension of our settlements to the west, is an extension of civilization,—of a people knit to the heart-strings of the republic; a constituent, inalienable part of its very vitals. It is an extension of the same people, identified in all that gives a moral and physical likeness to one great family. If they differ at all, it is only in such trifles as afford rather subjects of humorous banter than deep-rooted hostility. But they have yet stronger ties than mere political and religious affinities and habits. The emigrant to the west traces his blood to the old states, and remembers, with a sort of filial affection, the land where he sprang from,—the people among whom he first lived, and moved, and had a being. The associations of childhood; the memory of early affections; the ties of kindred, all combine to preserve those gentle bonds, which, go where we will, are never

severed. Accordingly, we find them keeping up a close connexion with their kindred; inquiring anxiously concerning their welfare, of those who come from the neighbourhood; and not unfrequently visiting them a distance of more than a thousand miles. Far distant as they are, they trace their connexion with the people of the Atlantic by the recollections of home and kindred; and are reminded of their identity with the great body politic, not by taxation or oppression, but by exercising their great constitutional rights, and partaking in the great communion of national happiness. These feelings and natural ties will subsist while the posterity of the emigrant can trace their relatives, or point to the spot of their fathers; and constitute ties too strong to be broken by a mere trifling opposition of supposed interest, or the operation of distance. Long before they are forgot, new bonds will be formed, equally strong, and far more durable, arising from habitual and increasing intercourse; from a clearer perception of connected interests; from a more intimate knowledge of each other; from the force of habit; from a new communion of increasing national glory; and from the growing influence of certain principles of thinking, common to our whole people. They perceive more clearly every day the benefits derived from a union of the states; and the results of every day's experience are becoming every moment more clearly indicative of a long, happy, and illustrious confederation. If the country ever undergoes a separation, it will not be owing, I prophesy, to the emigrants to the

west ; the seeds will be sown along the sands of the seashore.

In addition to these political and moral bonds of union, nature has kindly lent her assistance, in laying the ways of a great and combined people, in connecting the most distant, and apparently most disconnected portions of the territory, by rivers, having a beginning in different climates of the world, but centring in one common focus ; and, like the veins of the human body, all uniting in one heart. They guide the people from the most remote regions, and bring their productions to a few great marts, where they are reminded of their affinity, and feel their mutual connexion of interests. As these natural highways become travelled, and when the facilities of social and commercial intercourse shall be increased by opening new roads, all these connexions of blood and of interest will be more deeply felt ; and thus time, that weakens and destroys every other bond, will only rivet ours.

Another, and the last objection that has been brought to bear against the continuance of our freedom, union, and happiness, is founded upon that inequality of wealth, which has hitherto been the uniform result of time in every state, and which at length generates two entire and separate bodies of men, remaining distinct, and in a state either of mutual rivalry, or partial dependance, from generation to generation. Hence arises on one hand, a rabble of beggared, ignorant, and unprincipled people, who sink into an abject dependance on the rich, or

finally destroy them ; and on the other, an order of men sufficiently wealthy to maintain and corrupt the rabble, so as to make them instruments in destroying the public freedom. I know that so long as mankind seek in riches the chief means of happiness, that the rich will be envied, and consequently hated, by the poor. But here, in this most happily constituted political scheme ; here, where the abolition of the statute of entails, which was invented to preserve idleness and debauchery from their otherwise inevitable destiny, poverty and insignificance, has left property to pursue its natural course, and to become the reward of industry and talents,—these two distinct and permanent orders will indeed always subsist, but will always be composed of different persons and families. The perpetual changes and divisions of property consequent on the destruction of this principle, which is the very foundation of all systems of tyranny, will prevent any one family from being enormously rich for more than one generation ; and the facility with which industry procures land as well as money, will equally prevent any one family from being wretchedly poor, for a longer period. Neither this wealth nor this poverty is entailed upon them, as in other countries. The wealth of the rich man is divided among his children, and their children ; and at the end of that time the portion of each is so small as to render the exertion of industry and talents necessary to their subsistence. I have generally seen the second generation obliged to begin the world again. Thus, those who are the aristocracy of one

day, become the democracy of the next; and one half of the time they don't know to which they belong, but change sides before they become hearty in either cause. There never, consequently, can grow up in this country that permanent hostility of ranks, which, descending from generation to generation in the same families, acquires incorrigible inveteracy, and additional force, as it is bequeathed from father to son, until at last it comes to an open struggle who shall be master. If the rich succeed, the poor become instruments in forging their own chains; and if the poor prevail in the contest, property changes hands,—the rich become victims or exiles, and the state is modified anew, either according to the wildest theories of licentiousness, or some new system of tyranny, which in time produces the same effects over again.

As to the little sectional differences, which occasionally exhibit themselves, they originate rather in the rivalry of mischievous demagogues, than in any ill-will or opposition of interests in the states. They may scold, and threaten, and bully sometimes, but there towers at all times above these petty local impulses, a deep and noble, and universal attachment to the Union, which, whenever properly appealed to, will trample over disaffection. It is a feeling founded on the consciousness that that happiness and glory in which we all equally partake, as it was achieved, so it can only be preserved by UNION.

To me, then, my dear Frank, these dismal prophecies of our speedy dissolution betray not the true

smack of inspiration. They are the warnings of idle fears, or the ebullition of splenetic enemies, who not being able to destroy our present happiness, endeavour to poison the enjoyment, by denunciations of future ills. Let the philosophers of Europe, benighted by distance, or misled by inapplicable examples, continue to predict our disunion, and the loss of freedom,—I, for my part, have no fears for our lasting union, founded on our boundless increase, or the extension of our territory. Were ours a consolidated government, then, indeed, this extension might be the precursor of separation, because the centre of power would become so distant from the circumference, that its authority would not be sufficiently great to insure obedience. It would then be an overgrown monster, the pulsations of whose heart are not felt at the extremities. But it is to be recollected, that the authority for regulating our domestic affairs, settling our domestic differences, protecting our rights, of person and property, is not concentrated in our general government. It resides in the states separately, and their multiplication, therefore, has not the effect of making it in the slightest degree more inconvenient to obtain justice in courts of law, or protection from magistrates. Each state is sovereign, in this respect, over the domestic relations of its citizens, of whom, not one in ten thousand, ever has occasion to appeal to any tribunals, or any powers, but those of the state government. The judges of the United States courts regularly hold their circuit through the states, thus bringing their functions to

every man's door, and it can seldom be necessary to go to the seat of the general government for justice, unless a man chooses to play a last stake for what he imagines to be his rights. I have heard it urged, that the Union will be in danger of a dissolution when the members of congress are obliged to travel half the year, to legislate the other half. But I have a sovereign remedy for this. Only increase their mileage, and my life on it, you hear no complaints of distance.

On these grounds do I firmly trust in the long, happy, and glorious existence of this fair fabric of freedom. I do not fear its continuance, while our people continue to be educated as they are, and preserve that intelligence which was the parent of their liberty, and the loss of which will be the forerunner of its funeral. If there be in the nature of man the sources of inevitable corruption and degeneracy; if this tendency to degenerate is the uniform and eternal characteristic of the productions of his virtues and his intellect, as well as of his hands, I have no more to say. But I do maintain, that there is nothing in our political institutions, our laws, our constitutions, our geographical situation, or the prejudices, passions, and antipathies of the various members of this great confederation, that indicates a less duration, than usually falls to the lot of monarchies. I trust that our republic will continue at least long enough to see the civilized world full of republics, free and happy as herself—to be looked up to as the pure and illustrious fountain of civil and

religious liberty; and revered as the venerable patriarch of the whole beauteous tribe of free and independent nations. Then if, at last, she sinks under the denunciation passed on all the works of man, that none of them, however perfect, should be perpetual, it will be ages after you and I are gone, and so distant as to pass the limits of a distinct anticipation.

Luckily for you, it is just clearing up. The cocks begin to crow in anticipation of a golden sunset; the birds to twitter in the little copse just by my window; the vapours are gliding like sheeted ghosts swiftly up the mountain's side; and the ladies are venturing down to the spring again. I have written myself quite dry, so conclude *in great haste*. Good by.

## LETTER XX.

DEAR FRANK,

THE latter part of last week we left the sulphur springs to visit the *sweet springs*, so called, because they are sour. To avoid going round a distance of nearly forty miles, we made a short cut through the mountains by a bridle path, which led through a singularly wild region. It was a deep glen, winding between two of the most rugged mountains I had yet seen. A brook ran brawling through it, full of little cataracts, and skirted by mossy rocks, green with everlasting shades and vapours. The mountain laurel, the most beautiful shrub that ever grew, bloomed along the banks of this romantic stream, which seemed to have worried through this stubborn mountain by the labour of ages. Every thing was broken and rugged; and there was a kind of unsorted disjointed air in the whole mass, which seemed to indicate that the river-gods and the Oreades had had a *tiff* in these parts at some distant period of time.

However this may be, after winding eight or nine miles through this topsy-turvy glen, without any accident, except Oliver's horse being stung by a *yellow-jacket* hornet, which made him kick up as if ten spurs were in his ribs, Oliver keeping his saddle manfully, and for once demonstrating himself a

mighty cavallero. After winding, I say—in spite of Doctor Blair—through this glen, we came out suddenly upon a little pastoral vale, presenting a pleasant contrast to the scene we had just quitted. As usual, a river ran through it, sometimes by the side of the road, then crossing it, and disappearing for awhile, and anon coming back upon us again where we least expected it. This place would certainly produce a poet before long, were it not that the little children go without hats or bonnets, and consequently must have their brains dried up, or fried out, long before they know the value of them. Indeed I know of no more infallible method of making a thick skull, than going without a covering for the head. As long, therefore, as this custom shall last, I see no hope of any poet rising up in this valley, which is a great pity—for then he might immortalize its beauties; or, for aught I know, seriously illustrate the divine power of music, by the blowing down of the walls of Jericho by ram's horns, as a great poet of our day has done.

The sweet springs are in the county of Monroe, so called after the distinguished statesman of that name, who was formerly governor of Virginia. It is the custom in this state to name a county after each governor—and they have shown their estimation of the celebrated Patrick Henry, by calling two counties after him, Patrick, and Henry. But among the high republican names of Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and Henry, we are amused to find Prince George and Prince Frederick, and innumerable other

names, that set forth the loyalty of the early settlers of Virginia, who seem to have been bent upon demonstrating their devotion to monarchy by inseparably connecting it with the soil itself. The sturdy puritans of New England, who came over here republicans in fact, never indulged this propensity; and so far as I know, all the names there, were given in reference to the birthplaces of their leaders, or from some connexion that led to the christening.

The spring rises in a long narrow valley, skirted by two high hills, as valleys usually are. It is frequented by people from all parts of Virginia, and many of the more southern states. It is said to be salutary in consumptive cases, or debility occasioned by any cause. Young married people also come here—for reasons which I am at a loss to conjecture, as I never heard that our rivers or springs were infested with any of those pestilent poyspering gods that played such tricks with bathing damsels in days of yore. I heard, however, of more than one young lady here who was afraid to bathe in the sweet spring fountain—lest something might happen to her.

Among the curiosities of this place, I saw an old man of near eighty, who travelled four or five hundred miles every summer, to keep the dying taper just alive. People wondered, most wisely, as they thought, at this old man taking so much trouble about nothing. But in honest truth, notwithstanding all that is muttered by querulous mortals, there is something in "this pleasing anxious being," that, like a wayward old friend, we cherish dearly, notwithstanding he

grows worse and worse every day. For my own part, instead of turning up my nose, or shrugging my shoulders, at such tenacity of existence, I love to see it; for though not very likely, yet 't is possible I may grow old myself before I die; and it is consoling to see breathing proofs, that there are pleasures worth living for, even in old age. Though neither rich, nor married, the world is good enough for me; and while the sun shines gloriously—the moon and stars greet me in my evening walks—while the leaves grow green on the trees—the flowers bloom in the fields—the brooks gurgle—the birds sing, and one living soul cares a rush for me—I am willing to shake hands with it wherever we meet.

As I am about leaving all the springs, hot and cold, bitter and sweet, I will say a few words to you about the modes of living at all that I have as yet visited. It is to be premised, that very few people visit these springs, remote and difficult of access as they are, except to avoid the autumnal season, which is unhealthy in the lowlands; or in the hope of arresting the progress of some dangerous malady. Few come there for pleasure, and still fewer to exhibit their fine clothes. Indeed the greater proportion of the company consists of invalids; and, of course, little amusement or gayety is to be found at these places. Bathing, drinking the waters, eating and sleeping, are the principal occupations; and for recreation, they sometimes dance of evenings—when there is any music.

It is well they have this resource, else they would

be sadly put to it; for there is at none of these springs a *drawing-room*, where such of the company as choose may meet for social purposes, either at morning or evening. The ladies live in cabins, most of them containing but one room—which, of course, has a bed in it—and we Americans are not yet in that pure state of Parisian innocence that we can visit a lady in her bedroom, without considerable—trepidation. Thus the only social place of meeting is at the spring; and there few opportunities for conversation occur. A neat, capacious, and well-furnished drawing-room, would add infinitely to the pleasures of these fashionable resorts.

It so happened, that a servant of one of the gentlemen here was an adept in playing Virginia reels, which are true native-born dances; and, in my mind, infinitely preferable to cotillons and waltzes—the first of which are only calculated for a people that are born dancing, and the latter for people who are reconciled to indecency, by seeing it practised from their birth. It is not to be wondered at, that custom should render such, insensible to the public exhibition of ladies whirling round a room in the arms of gentlemen; but that England and America—the one past her frolicsome days, and the other arrived at years of discretion, should fall into the practice of such preposterous novelties, at war with their ideas of common decorum, is not easily accounted for. But it seems that nations, however vain of themselves, cannot refrain from now and then following the fashions of people they affect to despise. There

is almost always one nation which sets the fashion to its neighbours, either in dress, dancing, or some equally important matter. This is not peculiar to the civilized world—for Commodore Porter tells me there is a little island among the group of the Marquesas, the inhabitants of which give the *ton* to all the others. The warriors of Madison's island imitated their warlike weapons, and tattooed themselves after their style; and the fashionable ladies were accustomed to paddle over in canoes to buy their millinery.

It is only, however, the higher, more refined class, who thus indulge their capricious tastes in adopting foreign novelties. The people at large, who constitute the nation; who are the true depositories of its manners, habits, strength, and glory, preserve, and are fond of those original peculiarities, which give a national physiognomy, distinct in various features from that of every other. They are attached to the modes of their youth; and so far from considering it a proof of either sense or refinement, to adopt others, look upon the man who does it, as having vitiated his taste; or, what is more probable, that he affects what he cannot feel. It has been observed, that the most imitative animal in nature is a dunce; and Heaven help our poor country, at least that part of it along the seashore, if the rule applies to a nation, for it imitates every body in turn. Almost every ship that comes into port turns the *bon ton* topsy-turvy, and in one week creates a French revolution among hats, caps, gowns, and petticoats. I remember, on the arrival of the Hannibal, from Bordeaux, the

republican ladies, who are mostly under French influence, appeared in hats of such enormous dimensions, that an honest countryman of the west observed, they looked as if they were sitting in the back seat of a great covered wagon. A few of the most sturdy republican young fellows in the meantime wore little short coatees, with broad backs, and buttons at a mighty distance from each other. The federal bucks and belles, however, sided with England. The former, at least those who had travelled, put on corsets, wore long-skirted, narrow-backed coats, so tight that it was generally supposed they were buttoned by machinery. Then they suffered their hair to grow into a mighty bunch behind, and walked with the genuine *Rutland wriggle*; that is to say, on tiptoe, and with a most portentous extension of the hinder parts. But the ladies who professed fashionable fealty to England, did incontinently disclaim the covered wagons, and yclept themselves in little bonnets, shaped like a clam-shell; and because the prince-regent did affect fat women, contrived their dresses in such a manner, that what with puffings, &c. they looked almost as broad as they were long. All this was, however, reversed by the next arrival, I suppose; and what succeeded it I am not able to tell.

Now is it not a sin and a shame, that none of our fashionable bucks or belles have genius to invent a new mode of their own, or influence to carry it into general adoption? If the fashionable people had any spirit, they would make their own fashions, rather than borrow them thus servilely from abroad, by

which means they are never in the fashion, since, before it can get here, some other has taken its place, where it was originally adopted. If we only had a national costume, national music, national dances, national literature, national feelings, and a few other trifles, what a respectable and glorious nation we would soon become! So long, however, as it is the test of refinement and fashion to imitate the kept mistresses of kings and princes in dress; Bond-street loungers in manners; Italian castrati in music; and border-ballads in our poetry—so long will we deservedly pass for a contemptible imitative race. All this, I dare say, smacks of vandalism; and should it ever get to the ears of the English reviewers, who are lords of opinions in this country, will very likely get me a sound drubbing. I don't care, not I:—while I live, move, and have a being, I will continue to raise my voice, feeble as it is, against that habit of imitation, that want of manly, national self-confidence and respect, which is the characteristic of those great cities most especially, that give the tone to fashionable manners, modes, and opinions, all along the Atlantic coast. It is this which represses the genius of our country, and palsies exertions that are sure never to be properly estimated; it is this which calls down upon us the contempt of foreigners;—it is this which makes it the criterion of refinement to throw away every feeling of respect and affection for the land of our birth,—and it is this alone that stands in the way of this nation very soon becoming one of the first in the world. Farewell.

## LETTER XXI.

DEAR FRANK,

THE two principal inquiries made by the sage Pantagruel, the traveller of princes, and the prince of travellers, when he came to a strange place, were as to the quality of the wine and the state of learning. These he considered as most worthy his attention; and I shall follow his example; first, because he was a mighty king, and legitimate withal; secondly, because he was a giant; and thirdly, because I agree with him in opinion. As to the wine of the south, it is good; and if you don't believe it—*veni; vidi; vici*—which means, come, taste, and try.

Having settled the first Pantagruelian inquiry, we will proceed to the second. It has been remarked, I believe, that large congregations of men are necessary to a flourishing state of literature. Cities are for that reason essential; they bring together great masses of people; they furnish conveniences of all kinds for the publication of books, and in the vast variety of character, as well as incident they afford, present the materials for composing them. Where a people is sparsely distributed over a great surface, and men reside at a distance from each other, it is not to be expected that new books will multiply, because, in the first place, there will be few readers and

buyers ; and in the second, the means of publication are not at hand. Printing-presses and printers are the growth of cities, and without these, books multiply but slowly in manuscript.

Probably not one-fifth of the people of Virginia reside in towns. By far the larger portion live in the country all the year round, and from the great extent of their plantations, in comparative solitude. They exchange long sociable visits it is true, but the greater part of the time they have about them none but the domestic circle. Having plenty of slaves, they do not work themselves, and hence they have a large portion of spare time at their disposal, to be spent either in sedentary or active amusements, just as habit or inclination may prompt. Now people who live much alone, only come into collision with each other occasionally, and all the rest of the time see nobody around but dependants, will naturally acquire all the characteristics of independence, all its faults, and all its virtues. They will be little influenced by the opinions of others, with whom they have little or no intercourse, and consequently think and act for themselves. They will be under less restraint than those who are hemmed in on every side in crowded cities and thickly populated countries, and their characters will consequently assume a more bold original cast.

I think I have observed this in the people of Virginia—I mean the genuine Tuckahoe, of the old Saxon breed. The cockney, accustomed to the nice formalities of city drawing-rooms, and the restrained

intercourse of their occupants, will at once be struck with the frank, off-hand candour of a Virginian, and almost mistake it for blunt rusticity, if not downright rudeness; whereas it is nothing more than an exhibition of that independence which is the result of his situation and modes of life. He will surprise you by differing on subjects which you had supposed quite settled on the authority of the Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews, or some other equally infallible oracle, because in his retirement he has been accustomed to think for himself, and adopt his own conclusions. Above all, he will exhibit his peculiarities, his virtues, and his faults, right out before a stranger, without disguise or apology, because he has passed his life on his plantation among his slaves, before whom he did not choose to take the trouble of putting on a mask. This characteristic is apt to make him somewhat odious to the cockney, who has lived all his life in a crowd, and acquired the habit of perpetual restraint, or in other words, unceasing hypocrisy, the indispensable armour of the crowd. He will naturally accuse him of being ill-bred, because we always apply the test of experience in forming our estimate of manners; and a person unacquainted with the value of frankness and independence, will be apt enough to mistake them for coarseness or impudence.

But how, you will perhaps ask, does all this prosing apply to literature, which was the subject of my story? Faith, not much, Frank; but I believe I can make out some connexion, if I am fairly put to it. This independence of character, in a great degree pre-

serves them from the degrading habit of perpetual imitation. They will not suffer the Edinburgh or the Quarterly to think and decide for them; they will not give up Locke for Dugald Stewart; Sir Isaac Newton for Herschel; Shakspeare for Pantomime; or Milton for Lord Byron, though it should be ever so much the fashion; nor will they become literary, though every man were to be his own author elsewhere.

The fashion of being literary has, therefore, not yet infected them to any great extent. They have, in general, been well educated in the seminaries of the north, or abroad, as was the fashion in the south before the Revolution; and they are sufficiently acquainted with the old standard writers, although perhaps deficient in a thorough respect for the second-rate productions of the second-rate school of dandy writers. They have, in short, a literary taste, though they may not be literary. They have not, perhaps, so many books, but they are of a better sort than is common. Indeed, the number of really valuable books, compared with the lumber of countless libraries in the Christian world, is such as to do no great credit to the human intellect after all is said and done. Their books are also of a graver, more solid character, for I don't think they in general relish humorous productions greatly. They are spirited, not lively; for fun and laughter are not the growth of hermitages. The lonely fox-hound of the hills, is one of the gravest of animals; it is only when associated with society that the dog becomes gay, cheerful, and

frisky. It is so with man. The Virginia slave is the gayest of mortals, because he is surrounded by hundreds of his fellows; the Virginia master is grave, because he lives so much alone. He requires strong excitements to waken him into gayety, and hence he bets high when he bets at all; rides like the fiend when astride a blood-horse, and frolics to the uttermost bounds of rational folly.

Virginia has produced many excellent writers, and a still greater number of excellent speakers, although she has not been productive of many books. Every young man in Virginia, almost without exception, aspires to political distinction. He may begin as a lawyer, a doctor, or even a parson, but he is pretty sure to end in a politician. Hence he studies and practices the art of extempore speaking, rather than that of writing, and consequently much of the literature of Virginia consists in oratory and political disquisitions. In these two departments, Virginia may challenge at least an equality with her sister states. The fame of Patrick Henry, is in a great degree traditionary; there are but few specimens of his oratory extant, and these, perhaps, like those of many other celebrated speakers, do not altogether justify his reputation, any more than the speeches of Demosthenes, Cicero, Lord Chatham, and many others, realize what has been handed down to us of their extraordinary effects on their hearers. I have met with persons, however, who had heard him speak, and they all agree as to the magic of his voice, look, and manner. John Randolph, of Roanoke,

certainly no bad authority, remembered him in his youth, and delighted to tell of his climbing up the window of the court-house, to hear and see him argue the great question between the Scots merchants and the Virginia planters, when he brought tears into the eyes of the old Scots agent, at the moment he was giving the death blow to his claims. He also used to describe to me his debut at Williamsburgh, then the seat of the colonial government in Virginia, as he had heard it from one who was present, where he appeared in the likeness of a simple country youth, dressed in homespun, and his light hair tied with a riband. It was then the fashion for gentlemen to attend in full dress in the house of burgesses, with full puff powdered wigs, gold-laced vests, small clothes and stockings. Every body stared at this strange country bumpkin; and when he got up to speak, there was a strong disposition to laugh at him. Randolph described him to me, as rising with an air of deep embarrassment, and standing a few moments, perfectly silent, his head depressed, and his eyes cast to the floor, as if he had nothing to say, or wanted confidence to give it utterance. The merriment of the house gave place to sympathy, and every one began to feel anxiety for the bashful lad. He commenced with a few sentences, uttered amid long pauses, and in a low tone, as if appealing to the indulgence of the house; by degrees he seemed to gain confidence—he became at length animated—his chest expanded—he raised himself to his full height—his eyes sparkled—his gestures assumed the enchantment of nature

and grace—his voice tempered itself to every sentiment—he adopted the tone of a master instructing his disciples—and finally, carried every thing before him with a torrent of irresistible eloquence. One great art of Patrick Henry was displayed in adapting himself to the feelings of his audience. He waited till he saw others becoming warm, before he became warm himself—he watched their looks, and when he saw the flame lighted, poured oil into it, until it became a consuming fire. By this judicious restraint, this salutary delay; by just keeping ahead of his hearers, he led them almost where he pleased, instead of leaving them behind out of sight, as I have seen many famous orators do, who began where they should have ended, and commenced striking the iron before it was hot. Perhaps the true secret of successful oratory lays in this nice adaptation of our own passions to the passions of an audience.

Patrick Henry was not a first-rate writer. He was on committees in the old congress, and on one occasion drafted an address, on some momentous subject, which, however, was not adopted. If I recollect aright, the task was committed to John Dickinson, who executed it in a most masterly manner. Dickinson was a fine writer, and his letters of a Pennsylvania farmer should be incorporated with the classics of our country. Like many others, however, who had “toed the mark,” as our friend, the old alderman says, up to the crisis of the Declaration of Independence, he either doubted its expediency, or feared its consequences, and, by declining

to vote for that glorious measure, in some degree tarnished his fame, and forfeited his place among the immortal "signers."

Henry, indeed, was no bookworm. A gentleman who knew, and was neighbour to him, after the Revolution, described him to me as a man of the most perfect simplicity of character and manners, as indeed all really great men are. His whole library consisted of a few odd volumes of the Virginia statutes, and his amusement was to lay on his back upon the floor, and play the fiddle to his children. He was an indulgent parent, but careless as to his affairs; was frequently embarrassed in his circumstances, and died, I believe, if not in debt, at least poor.

Many of Henry's cotemporaries, in Virginia, were men of extraordinary talents, and excelled in oratory. Richard Henry Lee, who moved the Declaration of Independence; his brother Arthur Lee; Pendleton, Wythe, and others, were all excellent speakers, and of a great reach of understanding. In fact, I believe that at no period since that time, and I fear, at no future period, was there, or will there be found, in this, or any other country, a constellation of men, coming from all quarters of the Union, that can bear a comparison with the Fathers of the Revolution. There was a great work to perform, and Providence provided instruments in proportion to its magnitude. But, at present, I am writing only of Virginia.

One of the clearest writers of this fine old state, was Washington. I observe a vast improvement in his papers and correspondence, in the progress of the

Revolution. He wrote an immense number of public letters during his life, and though his style was always remarkable for clearness, brevity, and simplicity, these qualities are more and more conspicuous, as practice accustomed him to arrange and express his thoughts. It would be difficult to point out two finer pieces of writing, than the address to the army, at Newburgh, and that to the people of the United States, on his retiring from public life. There is eloquence of the highest character in both, but it is the eloquence of Washington—sincere, though chastened—lofty, without declamation—fervid, without passion.

I am aware that these noble compositions have been claimed by other hands, in behalf of two gentlemen, who are already so sufficiently distinguished by their own acknowledged and unquestionable productions, as to render them quite independent of any borrowed lustre, reflected even from the glories of Washington. Whoever will compare the acknowledged writings of these two gentlemen, with the addresses in question, will observe a dissimilarity, I might almost say, contrast, that renders it at least extremely improbable that they should come from the same hand. The almost passionate style of one, and the rich, ornamental, and somewhat diffusive character by which the writings of the other are distinguished, accord illy with the chastened feeling, the temperate dignity, the almost severe simplicity of Washington's avowed productions. The internal evidence is, in my opinion, too complete to admit of

the slightest question, and I am much mistaken, if the world will ever be brought even to doubt the claims of the Father of his Country to two addresses, of which, none but himself could have been the author.

I have also occasionally heard certain sly insinuations, purporting that Washington was indebted, for no small portion of his fame, as a military chief, to one of the gentlemen, whose claims I have just been discussing, by whose advice he principally governed himself. That Washington was accustomed to ask, and avail himself of the advice of his counsellors, and especially of the gentleman in question, is a supposition entirely in conformity with his caution and his modesty. But that he was governed by any man, or influenced by any consideration, to disregard the dictates of his own judgment and experience, is entirely inconsistent with the whole course of his life. He walked too steadily to be in leading-strings. Men, governed by others, are at the mercy of the passions, interests, and temperament of others, and always falter when left to stand alone. Washington, on the contrary, pursued his course steadily, never varied from his perfect consistency of character, or swerved from the settled purpose of his soul; and there is not on record, in the history of mankind, a character more complete in itself, or more perfectly homogeneous. How absurd then, to suppose that such a mind, was in vassalage to the opinions of another! As well might these cavillers assert that the noble vessel, which pursues her course unwavering towards her purposed haven, amid calms and storms,

light and darkness, is steered by the rudder of the little cockboat fastened under her stern. I regret to see such claims advanced in behalf of men, so entirely independent of all doubtful fame.

The writings of Mr. Jefferson have already become classical. If he had never put pen to paper, except in preparing the Declaration of Independence, that alone would have given him immortality; and if he had never written that incomparable state paper, his subsequent works would have secured him the same distinction. I never saw either Washington or Jefferson, except when so young, as to have lost every trace of the fact, other than an indistinct, misty recollection. He is represented to me as being a man exceedingly graceful, yet simple in his manner, and somewhat careless in matters of etiquette, as will appear from the following anecdote, which I had from Mr. Madison, of whom I shall say more anon.

Mr. Anthony Merry was the first minister from England, if I am not mistaken, who came accredited to Mr. Jefferson, on his accession to the presidency. On his introduction to the president, whom he found sitting on a sofa, throwing up his slipper and catching it on his toe, Mr. Merry made a regular diplomatic harangue, which was answered by Mr. Jefferson shaking hands with him in a friendly howd'-ye-do style, expressing his pleasure at seeing him, and asking him to sit down, just as they do in Old Virginia. The representative of majesty did not know what to make of this, but was soon put at ease, and into good humour, by the charm of Mr. Jeffer-

son's conversation, and went away sufficiently well pleased. A few days after he was invited to dine with the president, and as there was no etiquette at Mr. J.'s table, it happened that he got a seat somewhat approximating to the lower end of the table. He was so affronted at this, that he would not eat any dinner, and left the table abruptly as soon as decency would permit. That very evening, the secretary of state, Mr. Madison, received a note from the minister, stating the disrespect which had been shown to the representative of his Britanic majesty, in not placing him properly at the dinner table, and announcing his determination not to accept any more invitations, unless this important point of etiquette was properly arranged. He was answered, that there was no such thing as etiquette kept up by Mr. Jefferson, who, being a widower, and having no lady presiding over his establishment, wished to receive his friends in the most easy and familiar manner. He was moreover assured, that no disrespect was intended to himself, or the monarch he represented.

Sometime after this, Mr. Jefferson, wishing to invite Mr. Merry again, commissioned a friend to sound him in an indirect manner, as to whether he would accept or not. He replied, that if Mr. Jefferson invited him as Mr. Merry simply, he was at his service, but if, as the representative of his Britanic majesty, he must decline, unless his proper place was assigned him at table. Mr. Jefferson did not enter into this nice distinction, and the invitation was never given.

Whether this affair in any way contributed to the war, which took place some years afterwards, I cannot say; but certain it is, that such is the importance attached by the foreign diplomatic corps, to the privilege of going first into a room and sitting highest at table, that gradually our government has been obliged to yield to it, and the order of precedence is now as rigidly adhered to at Washington, as at the court of any sovereign in Europe. Happening to be talking to a lady, the wife of a high officer of state, at a party at the French minister's, some few years ago, when the company was summoned to supper, I offered her my arm. She looked embarrassed, but did not accept of it, and presently the minister himself came and handed her in. I found all this was perfectly understood beforehand, and I dare say the minister would have written a diplomatic note to the secretary of state, had I interfered successfully with his prerogative of handing in one of the plainest old ladies in company.

Mr. Madison, with whom I spent two or three weeks, the year before last, and from whom I learned more than I have ever learned in the same space of time, being retired from public life, communed with me familiarly on past times and political events. I remember one evening, as we were sitting in two Spanish chairs, out under the fine doric portico, at Montpelier, whence you see the long line of the Blue Ridge, bounding a charming prospect, he amused himself and me, by passing in review the different foreign ministers, with whom he had intercourse,

either as secretary of state or president of the United States. Of all these, Mr. Liston, he said, was the ablest by far, and he added archly, "Mrs. Liston was a still greater diplomatist than her husband." She once got a state secret out of Timothy Pickering that was worth a million. Jackson—Copenhagen Jackson, as he was called here, was also a man of talents, but wanted temper and discretion. The rest—but some of them are still living, and therefore I pass them by, with the single remark, that the British government should never send any of its second-rate diplomatists here. They are obliged to cope with the whole force of our cabinet, president and all, and are at too great a distance to receive instructions from home to meet every emergency. They should be clever fellows if they wish to bargain with Jonathan, I can tell them.

But the prince of diplomatists was Melli Melli, the Tripolitan envoy. Mr. Madison, while president, always kept up the Old Virginia custom, of sending round punch before dinner. Melli Melli, and his suite, rigidly abstained from this, as well as from wine, in presence of the Christian dogs, but they always lingered behind the company going in to dinner, and emptied the punch-bowl. Melli Melli was exceedingly solicitous to gain a certain point with Mr. Madison, and even shed tears, at the same time assuring him, by his interpreter, that if it was not granted, the Dey, his master, would certainly strangle him. He had a great inclination to marry some half a dozen wives at Washington, and was exceedingly

indignant at learning that a man could only have one wife in this country.

This truly great man lives retired from the world, as much as the world will let him. His house is open to every decent traveller. They come and go when they please, and are all welcome, though not all treated alike. The master and mistress of the house do not give their company equally to all. The old gentleman rides every day over his farm, consisting of five thousand acres, and is the greatest hand at opening gates with a crooked stick I ever met with. He retires after this to read or write, and is one of the most witty, pleasant, cheerful, mellow, dinner companions in the world. Neither a glutton or an anchorite, he enjoys every good thing with a philosophic moderation, and when suffering any temporary indisposition, always, as he expresses it, "throws his knife and fork at it"—that is, cures it by abstinence. I could tell you a thousand little anecdotes and traits of this great and good man, but will reserve them that we may have something to talk of when we meet. He is beyond all comparison the finest example of a dignified and happy old age, that ever came under my observation. Long may he live, and long enjoy the society of his excellent, cheerful, benevolent wife; and when he departs from the scene of his dignified career, may he die as a great and good man should die, without pain and without fear.

Having passed all his life in public affairs, the writings of Mr. Madison are principally on political questions. Of these, the style is admirably adapted to

the subject, and the temperate philosophic manner in which he always discusses every thing. In none of his writings, or speeches, is there to be found the slightest indecorum, or unseemly exhibition of passion. Every sentence is characterized by a temperate earnestness, a deep conviction, a philosophic spirit of inquiry, and a power of research, as well as of generalization, such as are only to be found in the productions of minds of the highest order. The *Federalist*, of which he was one of the principal authors, is the most valuable work ever written in this country. Admirable for its style, its research, its just principles, and its clear expositions of the great charter of our liberties. There exists in the literature of no nation of the world, so clear, and so complete a commentary and analysis of the true nature and principles of a representative government; and whenever the people of the old world, shall remodel their institutions to suit the changes which have taken place in every thing else, and man among the rest, they will do well to make this book their political bible. It encourages no excesses, sanctions no licentiousness of the people, and recognises no despotism of kings. It is, in short, a safe guide through the dangerous shoals and quicksands, which appear on every side, during the conflict between proud overbearing oppression, and impatient revengeful resistance.

I received the following particulars from Mr. Madison, in relation to this celebrated work. It was commenced principally with a view to induce

the state of New-York to accede to the new constitution of the United States, which she was unwilling to do, principally on account of the article giving to the general government the entire disposal of the commercial revenues of the different states. The city of New-York was then fast rising into commercial consequence, and the state did not like to relinquish the benefit of its own peculiar advantages. The numbers originally appeared in a paper published by Francis Childs, in New-York, where congress was then sitting, and the signature at first adopted was that of "A Citizen of New-York." The subjects branched out, however, in such a manner as to involve the interests of all the other states, and this, with the fact that one of the writers was not a citizen of New-York, induced a change of the signature to that of "Publius." The late Colonel William Duer, was originally associated with Mr. Madison, Mr. Hamilton, and Mr. Jay, and contributed one or two numbers. They were, however, considered not sufficiently conciliatory, and do not appear in the series.

At Richmond I met with a work of which, perhaps, not one in ten in our part of the world ever heard, and which not one in ten thousand has ever read. It is called "An inquiry into the principles and policy of the government of the United States," and the author is John Taylor, of Caroline county, Virginia. He was, as I am informed, a serjeant in the Virginia line during the Revolutionary war, and settled after the peace in Caroline, where he became the oracle

and example, not only of the Virginia farmers, but the Virginia politicians. He published a work on farming, called "Arator," one of the best extant, and one of the most piquant amusing productions of the kind. He also wrote frequently for the public prints. But his great work is the "Inquiry," which is a root and branch affair. It was published at Fredericksburgh in 1814, in an octavo of six hundred and fifty-six pages. I shall bring a copy home with me, and insist on your reading every word.

It is a reply to Mr. John Adams the elder's defence of the American constitution, in which that distinguished writer and statesman lays down the principles, that "monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, are the only elements of government," and that "aristocracy is a work of nature." The subject branches out into nine sections under the following heads, viz :

"Aristocracy."

"The principles of the policy of the United States, and of the English policy."

"The evil moral principles of the government of the United States."

"Funding."

"Banking."

"The good moral principles of the government of the United States."

"Authority."

"The mode of infusing aristocracy into the policy of the United States."

"The legal policy of the United States."

These you perceive are high matters, and I can assure you they are grasped by one of the strongest hands that ever laid hold of them. I will not attempt to analyze a work which is in itself all analysis, but content myself with some extracts, which I hope will excite your appetite for the whole book. It is a study worthy of a statesman, for which profession I think you have a particular aptitude, as I remember to have seen you look as innocent and ignorant about matters, in which you were a ringleader, as the child unborn.

Mr. Taylor examines the position, that "aristocracy is natural and inevitable," and maintains "that as aristocracy is artificially created, it may be artificially destroyed."

"Had it been true," he says, "that knowledge and virtue were natural causes of aristocracy, no fact could have more clearly exploded Mr. Adams's system, or more unequivocally have dissented from the eulogy he bestows on the English form of government. Until knowledge and virtue shall become genealogical, they cannot be the causes of inheritable aristocracy; and its existence without the aid of superior knowledge and virtue, is a positive refutation of the idea that nature creates aristocracy with these tools."

"Similar reasoning applies still more forcibly to the idea of nature's constituting aristocracy, by means of exclusive virtue. Knowledge and virtue both fluctuate. A steady uniform effect, from fluctuating causes, is morally impossible. And yet, Mr. Adams

infers a natural aristocracy, from the error that virtue and knowledge are in a uniform relation to vice and ignorance; sweeps away by it every human faculty for the attainment of temporal or eternal happiness, and overturns the efficacy of law to produce private or public moral rectitude."

"The contrivance for creating a system, by asserting and setting out from the will of God, or from nature, is not new. Most of those systems of government, to which Mr. Adams refers us for instruction, resorted to it; and therefore the propriety of reviving the principle upon which these ancient systems were generally or universally founded, to revive its effects, must be admitted. 'It is the will of Jupiter,' exclaimed some artful combination of men. 'The will of Jupiter is inevitable,' responded the same combination to itself; and ignorance submitted to a fate manufactured by human fraud."

"An opposition to aristocratical power seems to have been constantly coeval with an advance of national improvement. It began in Greece, appeared in Rome, and has continued the companion of mental improvement down to the present time. As knowledge advanced in England, this opposition gained ground, and at length achieved a victory before that wise natural aristocracy discovered its danger."

Mr. Taylor thus reasons on the effects of the discovery of the art of printing, and its agency in destroying the natural inequality of knowledge, together with the aristocracy on which it was founded.

“The peerage of knowledge or abilities, in consequence of its enlargement by the influence of printing, can no longer be collected and controlled in the shape of a noble order or a legislative department. The great body of this peerage must remain scattered throughout every nation by the enjoyment of the benefits of the press. By endowing a small portion of it with exclusive rights and privileges, the indignation of the main body is excited. If this endowment should enable a nation to watch and control an inconsiderable number of that species of peerage produced by knowledge, it would also purchase the dissatisfaction of its numberless members unjustly excluded; and would be a system for defending a nation against imbecility, and inviting aggression from strength, equivalent to a project for defeating an army, by feasting its vanguard.”

After sketching the nature and origin of the various aristocracies of the earlier ages, that originating in superstition, and that derived from superiority in arms and in the art of war, he comes down to another, which is characteristic of the present age, and most especially of our own country.

“As the aristocracies of priestcraft and conquest decayed, that of PATRONAGE AND PAPER-MONEY grew, not the rival, but the instrument of a king; without rank or title; regardless of honour; of insatiable avarice, and neither conspicuous for knowledge or virtue, or capable of being collected into a legislative chamber. Differing in all its qualities from Mr. Adams’s natural aristocracy, and defying his remedy,

it is condensed and combined by an interest exclusive of, and inimical to public good.

“ This subject will be hereafter resumed, as possessing, in every view, a degree of importance beyond any political question at this era affecting the happiness of mankind. Then, having previously attempted to prove, that even the titled aristocracy of England is no longer an order, requiring the efforts of a king and a people to curb, I shall proceed to show, that a new political feature has appeared among men, for which Mr. Adams’s system does not provide; and that England itself cannot now furnish materials for a government conformable to her own theory, because that theory was calculated for a nation less advanced in the division of knowledge and land, and in the arts of patronage and paper.

“ A distribution of knowledge, virtue, and wealth, has produced public opinion, which ought now to govern, for the very reason urged by Mr. Adams in favour of aristocracy. It is the declaration of the mass of national wealth, virtue, and talents. Power, in Mr. Adams’s opinion, ought to follow this mass in the hands of a few, because it is the ornament of society. It is unimportant whether aristocracy is a natural, physical, or moral effect; if it came by means natural, physical or moral, it may be lost or transferred. *Whenever the mass of wealth, virtue, and talents, is lost by a few, and transferred to a great portion of the nation, an aristocracy no longer retains the only sanction of its claim; and wherever these sanctions deposite themselves, they carry the interwoven power.*

*By spreading themselves so generally throughout a nation, as to be no longer compressible into a legislative chamber, or inheritable by the aid of perpetuity and superstition, these ancient sanctions of aristocracy become the modern sanctions of public opinion. And as its will (now the rightful sovereign upon the very principle argued in favour of the best founded aristocracy) can no longer be obtained through the medium of an hereditary order, the American invention of applying the doctrine of responsibility in magistrates, is the only one yet discovered, for effecting the same object that was effected by an aristocracy holding the mass of national virtue, talents, and wealth. This mass governed through such an aristocracy. This mass cannot now govern through any aristocracy. This mass has searched for a new organ, as a medium for exercising the sovereignty, to which it is allowed, on all sides, to be entitled; and this medium is REPRESENTATION."*

You will see, from these brief detached specimens, that this Mr. Taylor is no ordinary thinker and reasoner. He is clear, analytical, and profound. His book is almost too logical; it requires too great attention in the reader to comprehend it thoroughly, ever to become popular. But in its nature, character, and mode of treating a great subject, and above all, its direct practical application to our own system of government, I cannot but look upon it as next to the *Federalist*, the most important political work ever written in this country. The essays on the funding and banking systems, are most especially entitled to

the deep consideration of every citizen of the United States. They exhibit, in a clear, unanswerable series of facts and arguments, the silent, cunning, and almost inscrutable windings, by which these modern creators of aristocracy, under pretence of adding to the means and the wealth of a nation, operate as perpetual drains on the labouring classes, and landed interest, and finally create an aristocracy of concentrated wealth, "without rank or title; regardless of honour; of insatiable avarice, and neither conspicuous for knowledge or virtue." The legitimate aristocracy of virtue and talents, is thus superseded by that of paper-money, monopoly, and exclusive privileges; power goes over from land to money; from the many to the few; one-half the property of the nation is exempted from the burdens which the other is obliged to sustain, and the feudal baron is succeeded by the paper one. Thus, with equal rights guaranteed by the constitution and the laws; with a statute for ever abolishing the right of primogeniture, and of entailment of our own property, we see every day, nay, almost every hour of the day, the legislatures of the different states creating corporate bodies with exclusive privileges, and granting to hundreds of societies and corporations the right of holding property in perpetuity, which is uniformly denied to individuals. Each and every one of these corporate bodies is more or less of the nature of a monopoly; and monopolies, either of wealth, honours, privilege, or power; whether of kings, nobles, churchmen, corporate bodies, presidents of societies, or bank

directors, is fatal to the general diffusion of competency, wherever it exists.

Well and truly does Mr. Taylor observe in his work, that the peculiar situation of this country renders the application of old systems, and old reasonings, unphilosophical. Mankind are *not* always the same; time produces differences in the degrees of their knowledge, if not of their virtue. They may indeed be always actuated by the same passions, but their modes of action will vary with times and circumstances, and whenever their situation is materially changed, then will new modes of governing and controlling these passions be necessary; new restraints and new guards against their excesses. Originally, corporations were created for the purpose of restraining the aristocracy, and curbing the great feudal barons, by concentrating individual force, through the medium of a combination of individuals. The freedom of a corporation at once liberated a serf from all service to his feudal lord, and placed him under the protection of his corporate privileges. In Europe it was an expedient in favour of liberty; it created a counterpoise to feudal tyranny, and placed the members of the corporate body under the protection of a written charter of rights. But here the case is exactly reversed. The erection of corporations, for the purpose of manufacturing money, which is but another name for power, is nothing less than the creation of an order of barons, a privileged order—privileged to do what no single individual can do, and relieved from duties and responsibilities

to which any other citizen of the United States is inflexibly subjected. The wealthy alone can, by becoming stockholders and directors, avail themselves of these immunities, while the poor are for ever precluded from sharing either the privileges or the spoils of this new order of the paper aristocracy. Yet, because in feudal times, the King of England granted charters of incorporation for political purposes, we forsooth must do the same for pecuniary ones, without a single rational apology for imitating or rather overshooting the example!

It is too late now to check this system of moneyed monopolies. It must and will go on, until our government is out of debt, when the funding system will, of necessity, be discontinued, until we get in debt again, which can only happen in case of war. The whole paper system naturally grows out of the funding system, and if this last should be permanently relinquished in this country, every other branch of it will, in time, fall to the ground. Otherwise, the system of banking will expand, and grow, and swell, until at length it bursts with the pressure of its own emptiness, as it always has done, always will do, carrying ruin and wretchedness in its train. The people will then wake up, perhaps, for twenty years or so, until a new generation rises to act over the same charlatanries, for the pleasure of leaving to posterity their debts, instead of their property. Neither John Taylor, nor any body else, can prevent all this; the serpent should have been strangled in its cradle, before it acquired its full powers of

fascination. The battle ought to have been fought when the first bank-charter was applied for in the United States. Now, when the whole moneyed power of the Union is deeply interested in its continuance, nothing but a combination of the landed interest can possibly put down the system. But so long as these are persuaded into the ridiculous fallacy, that the multiplying of paper-money increases the value of their land and its products, such a combination is not to be looked for. Besides, the farmers never combine, and are therefore almost always the dupes or victims of those whose interests are so strictly identified, that they insure a unity of action.

But, for all this, I could wish that our legislators and rulers, instead of consulting old obsolete or inapplicable authorities, pinning their faith on the sleeve of writers of other ages, and other countries, and quoting the advocates of despotism, in support of the measures of a republic, would either make use of their own common sense and experience, or read John Taylor's book. They would then, perhaps, be able to comprehend that a system of stimulants, which may suit old ricketty bodies in the last stage of imbecility and decay, is not the best possible for one like ours, in the vigour of youth, health, and animation. Such a system is only calculated to enfeeble the energies of nature, and produce premature decrepitude. Much of the mischiefs I apprehend to our country, will originate in this habit of resorting to precedents, that neither suit our institutions, or government. But let us return to our subject.

Virginia has produced many other good writers, historical and political, but they are, so far as my knowledge extends, all of a graver sort, and on subjects admitting of but little humour and imagination. I am not aware that she has produced any poet of much note, though I have seen pieces by Judge Tucker, and one or two others, remarkable for grace, sprightliness and vivacity. I am somewhat puzzled at this, for I should imagine a country life, accompanied by leisure and competence, extremely favourable to the exercise of the imagination, as well as the growth of high-wrought feelings. Perhaps, however, this dearth of poetry may arise from the absence of a habit of publishing every thing they write, and that there may be much poetical genius lying dormant, or only existing in manuscript. It is not the finest geniuses that have the hardihood to appeal to the public on all occasions. Young genius is generally a modest sort of person, and is only enabled by long habit to look the world in the face, or take the chances of its admiration or ridicule.

One of the most pleasing, as well as popular productions of this country, is the letters of a British Spy, by Mr. Wirt, a celebrated lawyer of Richmond, and distinguished for his wit, as well as his eloquence. It is written in a rather elevated style, abounds in various beauties, and fully deserves the reputation it has acquired. Probably no American work of the kind has gone through more editions than this. Mr. Wirt is also the author of a periodical, or series of essays, called the Old Bachelor, which, though not

so well known, is, in my opinion, superior to the British Spy. I am tempted almost to regret that this gentleman has not devoted himself more to literature. We abound in first-rate lawyers, but there are few men in the United States that could have written the British Spy and the Old Bachelor. I cannot but hope that he will again resume his pen, and thus add another, to his various claims on the gratitude of Virginia.

Before I conclude this prodigious epistle, which must be placed to the account of a lame horse, I may as well say a few words on a subject closely connected with literature. I mean education. At present, and it has been the case for many years past, the young men of Virginia are, and have been, educated to the north. Mr. Randolph told me once, with a significant smile, that he "*prosecuted his studies*" sometime at Columbia college, in New-York, where he forgot all that he had learned before. "It was my own fault," he added. He certainly gained a most perfect knowledge of the city, however, for he knew much more of it than I, who have inhabited it for twenty years, and astounded me with inquiries about his old friends Blaze Moore, Rogert the biscuit baker, Billy the fiddler, and other well-known worthies of his time. He would ask, "Who lives at Phillips's corner, and Constable's corner, and in the old yellow brick house in William street," or Smith street, as he always called it, and puzzled me more about localities than I was ever puzzled before.

It resulted from the former, and indeed present

state of Virginia, where landed property is not distributed into small parcels, that a very large portion of the planters could afford to give their sons an education at one of the northern seminaries, and hence the domestic sources of education were, and still are, scanty and confined. You do not see so many school-houses along the roads here, as in our part of the world, because there are fewer children to educate, rather than from any indisposition to foster education. Hence they have been accused of a blameable neglect of this important duty of every free state. I think upon the whole, it would be better that their young men should be educated at home, and that ample means should be provided for that purpose;\* although whatever disadvantages might result from being thus dissevered from the salutary influence of home, would in some degree be balanced by the benefit of seeing more of the varieties of human character, and human institutions, and above all, mixing with their fellow-countrymen abroad, and wearing away the sharp edge of local prejudices. But after all, I believe it is the examples in our daily contemplation at home, and in domestic life, not the discipline of schools, that shape the morals of a people. It is the fashion now-a-days, to make knowledge synonymous with morals. A more dangerous dogma was never broached in the world, since knowledge, without morals, only increases the power to do evil, without in any degree restraining the will. The

\* This has since been done by the erection of a magnificent college at Charlottesville.

more I see of mankind, the more I am convinced, *that* is the best education which is limited to the acquisition of what is essential to the sphere in which we move, and the business in which we are employed. If nature has fitted a man to rise beyond this, nature will furnish the impulse and the means. Aided by the vast magazine of knowledge contained in books accessible to every one at this present time, the aspiring genius has ample means, and opportunities for self-cultivation, the best of all possible cultivation. On the other hand, the attainment of an education superior to our station, or the business to which we are destined, is very apt to unfit a man for both. He who might have been a good mechanic, a respectable farmer, or a useful labourer in the ordinary and indispensable occupations of life, aspires to become a mischievous pettifogger, a prosing, sleepy parson, or a steam doctor, and thus, instead of adding his quota to the sum total of human happiness, detracts from the enjoyments of social life, and becomes either a useless or mischievous member of society.

Knowledge is certainly one of the main pillars of freedom. Men must understand their rights, or they never can maintain them. They should also be sufficiently enlightened, if possible, to enable them to distinguish between a patriot and a mere demagogue. But this sagacity is rather the result of experience of human life, than of education. It is neither derived from books, nor can it be taught in schools. The greatest scholars are generally the least acquainted with men. That is a study of the great

university, where men meet in the struggle of conflicting interests and passions, and where alone they become adepts in distinguishing pretence from reality, sincerity from hypocrisy, and tinsel from gold. Universal education is a delicate task; the danger is, that you teach the labouring classes too much, rather than too little, and lose sight of their morals, in your zeal to make them learned. In my opinion, virtuous ignorance is preferable to vicious intelligence; and beyond all doubt, the most mischievous, the most pernicious of all communities, would be one which was at the same time corrupt and knowing, unprincipled and wise. Knowledge becomes a curse, when under the guidance of bad habits and bad principles. It is a cunning and wicked chymist, who prostitutes his art solely to the compounding of poisons.

Adieu, Frank—if thou hast survived the perusal of this long “yarn,” as our friend the commodore would call it. Remember me to the alderman, who would set me down for a Goth—or rather, *goat*, as he calls it, if he knew I doubted his great theory, that it is only necessary to the perfectability of man, that he should know thrice as much as he has any use for in this world. He forgets that people may have too much as well as too little of a good thing, and that a man’s having been on short commons all his life, is no reason for stuffing his posterity to suffocation.

*W. Lusk Lawrence from his friend  
J. W. Waulding.*

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BY  
A NORTHERN MAN.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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## LETTERS FROM THE SOUTH.

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### LETTER XXII.

DEAR FRANK,

THE other day, in taking a ramble from the spring, I came to where a fine trout stream of a most promising appearance skirted the foot of a long rambling hill. The sight of this brook revived my old propensity for fishing, which I ascribe to having early in life fallen in with honest Isaac Walton's work on angling; to my mind, one of the most pleasant books in the language. He mingles so much of a taste for natural beauty, so much of poetical feeling and description, and so much genuine simplicity, with his art, that one can't help loving the honest fisherman. The book begins with a dialogue between a fowler, a hunter, and an angler; in which each endeavours to establish the superiority of his favourite amusement. Honest Walton, as might be expected, gives the best of the argument to the latter, who, I remember, demonstrates the superiority of his art by proving that a majority of the apostles were fishermen.

I borrowed a fishing-rod from a miller near by, and followed the brook some miles without catching

a fish of any kind; either because there were none, or that the little wretches would not come and be caught. I was always in hopes of catching them, however; and this, I take it, after all, is the great pleasure of fishing and fowling. Trout do not abound so greatly in the mountain streams to the south, as they do in the north. "The chubb, chiven, or knot," as Walton calls him, is common in many places; but the most singular fish in this part of the world is called the *stone-toter*,\* whose brow is surmounted with several little sharp horns, by the aid of which he *totes* small flat stones from one part of the brook to another more quiet, in order to make a snug little circular enclosure, for his lady to lie in safely. This is truly a most ancient and fishlike gallantry, and right worthy the imitation of all bad husbands.

I am assured by gentlemen of veracity, that this part of the natural history of the stone-toter is actually true, though I suppose the orthodox naturalists will scout it, because it is not yet found in print, that I know of. These good people, the naturalists, make a certain code of laws, which they are pleased to call the laws of nature, and which, if the poor lady happens to transgress, she is accused of committing a grand *faux faux*, and her reputation grievously assailed. They will, no doubt, call this account of our polite fish a vulgar error, as they do every thing of which they are ignorant themselves; in pure spite, because other people discovered it before them. But I am sure the vulgar errors of the wise are tenfold

\* *Tote*,—To carry with labour; to lug along.

greater than those of the ignorant. How many learned theories, the result of most laborious stupidity, have we seen pass away, like shadows, at the dawn of day, only to give place to others more stupidly absurd; while the results of the daily experience of the unlearned remain the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever. The learned would contradict them if they dared, because they can't explain them; like the worthy gentleman who would not believe his hat was blown from his head, till he had consulted the fashionable theory of winds.

As I had heard much of the rattlesnakes and moccasins that infest these regions, I was on the look out for them during this little excursion: but did not meet a single one, nor do I believe they are by any means common. But I must tell you a story I heard from an honest man, at whose cabin I stopped awhile to rest myself along the brook. Before I begin the story, however, I will give you a sketch of his establishment, which will serve for a specimen of the people of these mountains.

His castle—every man's house is his castle, you know,—ergo, every house is a castle—was placed at the foot of the sunny side of a high hill, for the convenience of sunning the children; a practice equivalent to meat, drink, washing, and lodging, to these little rogues. It contained one large room, and a garret, that was ascended by a ladder, which, by-the-by, was quite unnecessary, as they might have made a pair of stairs of the children, who were of all sizes, in regular gradation, from eighteen inches

to six feet. It was a perfect bee-hive, full of living things. About the mantelpiece, or where mantelpieces usually are, was an almanac, a comb-case, and several spools of cotton, and about the fireplace lay a cat and dog fast asleep, while a little pig was smelling about, as is usual with that busy race. Nothing can give a more striking picture of the peace and quietude of a country cottage, than to see the antipathies of animals thus completely reconciled within its homely walls.

The good woman of the house was turning a large spinning-wheel, and ever and anon, as she passed back and forth, touched a cradle with her foot, in which reposed the youngest hope of the house, lulled to repose by the sonorous humming of the wheel. Two little urchins sat at the door munching apples, with heads rather whiter than their faces; two little boys were drawing hides from a vat near the house; two stout lads of sixteen or eighteen were in a little meadow across the brook; and the mother mentioned her eldest daughter had gone that morning, with two more of her children, to a school the other side of the mountain. "Body o' me," thought I, where do all these people sleep? But, as it was none of my business, I did not inquire. Labour and health can sleep right sweetly, where pampered idleness and bloated gluttony would lie awake, cursing their stars.

This industrious dame was a healthy, well-looking body enough; not quite so hollow in the shoulders though as some of our fashionable ladies, who really

do screw themselves up in such an equivocal manner, that were it not for their faces, one would be puzzled to tell whether their backs or fronts were towards him. This fashion is a decisive proof of the modesty of the sex—since we can admire the ladies' backs, even to intensity, without putting them to the blush. For my part, I don't know what will be the end of all this ; nor, indeed, do I much care, only I don't like to see too much of a good thing. But to return to the lady of the castle, who had no great pretensions to fashion, but was a true woman for all that—for she made a number of excuses on account of her house being so much out of order. Jenny had gone over the mountain before she had time to put things to rights, and she herself had enough to do besides.

The husband was a tanner, which accounts for his looking so young as he did ; as your tanners, you know, will last longer than other people. A sturdy dog—he would not take half a dollar I offered him for a bowl of milk, but actually looked as if he would *gouge* me when I insisted upon it. I could only account for his stupid indifference to money, from there being no banks in this neighbourhood. People are always more rational and enlightened where banks are plenty, and will take “kicks and coppers,” with great thankfulness, provided they come together. I am sorry to be under the necessity of confessing, that this refusal of the tanner furnishes another proof of the inferiority of the people of the back country to those of the cities, in politeness, refinement, and,

above all, in that most precious of all knowledge, a knowledge of the value of money. The inside of this ignorant man's house was furnished with two beds below, and the Lord knows how many above—a cradle—plenty of straw-bottomed chairs—a rifle hanging against the wall—good store of bacon—plenty of children—a staunch hound, and notable pussy, both acknowledged members of the family. The poor soul was content, for he did not know any better; and though I could easily have proved to him how miserable he was, I thought it better to let him alone.

And now for the story, which he related in answer to my inquiries about rattlesnakes. He told me, that somewhat more than six miles off, in the recesses of one of the most unfrequented mountains, there is a deep, circular valley, the bottom of which is covered with loose flat stones that have fallen down its steep sides. A gentleman on a visit to the springs once hired him and another person, a hunter, to accompany him to this valley, in order to ascertain whether the stories he had heard, but disbelieved, about it were true. They descended it, but without seeing a single snake; and the gentleman began to banter the hunter, who told him to stamp hard upon the flat stone where he was standing. He did so, and presently a good dozen rattlesnakes came out, to see who knocked at the door, I suppose. Alarmed at sight of the strangers, the snakes began to sound their rattles, like so many Philadelphia watchmen waked from a sound sleep, and thereupon came forth

several thousands of these reptiles, who rattled and hissed at such an execrable rate, that they were glad enough to retreat out of the valley with all convenient expedition. The tanner moreover added, that there was a great smell of cucumbers, and that for his part, he did not much mind the rattlesnakes, being used to them, but he could not reconcile himself to the looks of a rascally fellow, the like of which he had never seen before, who carried a great fin on his back, was shaped like a sunfish, and hissed ten times louder than his neighbours. The existence of a valley somewhere in this part of the world, containing a vast number of rattlesnakes, is believed by many well-informed people; but as to the little fellow with the fin, his being must remain a matter of doubt for the present. Whether the laws of nature permit a snake to wear a fin, must be left to those who *make* laws for her. Good by.

## LETTER XXIII.

DEAR FRANK,

I FEEL this morning a sort of humorous sadness; a sense of loneliness, and absence, and carelessness, that half amounts to a gentlemanlike melancholy. I believe I could entertain a score or two of blue devils; and be actually sad, if I could only find a tolerable reason to be sorry. Unluckily, I can't find a reasonable occasion to be unhappy; for I have got well of all my complaints, real and imaginary; have a reasonable supply of paper-money for my occasions; have got over my fears of French influence, ever since Napoleon began to grow fat—and am a bachelor! Yet, for all this, could I rail at the first-born of Egypt, and even find fault with the worthy lady at whose house we now are, detained by a shower, although her face is the picture of good humour, and her house the abode of good cheer. I intended to reason a little this morning, on cause and effect—a new subject! but, I reasoned, as people sometimes get up of a morning, wrong end foremost. I then joked the waiter, but got worsted, which only made me worse than before. This state of mind, under the influence of which the heart falls into a heavy depression, without any particular cause that

we know of, is sometimes ascribed to a presentiment of approaching evil, a warning coming from some mysterious source with which we are altogether unacquainted. But this is a superstitious idea, and consequently discarded by philosophers, who, in general, attribute it to an absence of real sources of misery, which leaves a vacuum for imaginary ones to creep in, and make a great bustle. They say the best and most radical cure for this mental disorder, is substantial care and real trouble; and accordingly agree in recommending matrimony as a sovereign remedy; that being the great evil, which renders all others insignificant. But instead of flying to this desperate remedy, I will try what occupation of mind will do in the way of relief.

In truth, the little solitary nook into which I am just now thrown, bears an aspect so interesting, that it is calculated to call up the most touchingly pleasing emotions, in the minds of those who love to indulge in the contemplation of beautiful scenes. We are the sons of earth, and the indissoluble kindred between nature and man, is demonstrated by our sense of her beauties. I shall not soon forget last evening, which Oliver and myself spent at this place. It was such as can never be described—I will therefore not attempt it; but it was still as the sleep of innocence—pure as ether, and bright as immortality. Having travelled only fourteen miles that day, I did not feel tired as usual; and after supper strolled out alone along the windings of a little stream about twenty

yards wide, that skirts a narrow strip of green meadow, between the brook and the high mountain at a little distance.

You will confess my landscapes are well watered, for every one has a river. But such is the case in this region, where all the passes of the mountains are made by little rivers, that in process of time have laboured through, and left a space for a road on their banks. If nature will do these things, I can't help it—not I. In the course of the ramble the moon rose over the mountain to the eastward, which being just by, seemed to bring the planet equally near; and the bright eyes of the stars began to glisten, as if sweeping the dews of evening. I knew not the name of one single star. But what of that? It is not necessary to be an astronomer, to contemplate with sublime emotions the glories of the sky at night, and the countless wonders of the universe.

“These earthly godfathers of Heaven's lights,  
That give a name to every fixed star,  
Have no more profit of their living nights,  
Than those that walk and wot not what they are.”

Men may be too wise to wonder at any thing; as they may be too ignorant to see any thing without wondering. There is reason also to believe, that astronomers may be sometimes so taken up with measuring the distances and magnitude of the stars, as to lose, in the intense minuteness of calculation, that noble expansion of feeling and intellect combined, which lifts from nature up to its great first

cause. As respects myself, I know no more of the planets, than the man in the moon. I only contemplate them as unapproachable, unextinguishable fires, glittering afar off, in those azure fields whose beauty and splendour have pointed them out as the abode of the Divinity; as such, they form bright links in the chain of thought that leads directly to a contemplation of the Maker of Heaven and earth. Nature is, indeed, the only temple worthy of the Deity. There is a mute eloquence in her smile; a majestic severity in her frown; a divine charm in her harmony; a speechless energy in her silence; a voice in her thunders, that no reflecting being can resist. It is in such scenes and seasons, that the heart is deepest smitten with the power and goodness of Providence, and that the soul demonstrates its capacity for maintaining an existence independent of matter, by abstracting itself from the body, and expatiating alone in the boundless regions of the past and the future.

As I continued strolling forward, there gradually came a perfect calm—and even the aspen-tree whispered no more. But it was not the deathlike calm of a winter's night, when the whistling wind grows quiet, and the frosts begin in silence to forge fetters for the running brooks, and the gentle current of life, that flows through the veins of the forest. The voice of man and beast was indeed unheard; but the river murmured, and the insects chirped in the mild summer evening. There is something

sepulchral in the repose of a winter night ; but in the genial seasons of the year, though the night is the emblem of repose, it is the repose of the couch, not of the tomb. Nature still breathes in the buzz of insects, the whisperings of the forest, and the murmurs of the running brooks. We know she will awake in the morning, with her smiles, her bloom, her zephyrs, and warbling birds. "In such a night as this," if a man loves any human being in this wide world, he will find it out, for there will his thoughts first centre. If he has in store any sweet, or bitter, or bitter-sweet recollections, which are lost in the bustle of the world, they will come without being called. If, in his boyish days, he wrestled, and wrangled, and rambled with, yet loved, some chubby boy, he will remember the days of his childhood, its companions, cares, and pleasures. If, in his days of romance, he used to walk of evenings, with some blue-eyed, musing, melancholy maid, whom the ever-rolling wave of life dashed away from him for ever—he will recall her voice, her eye, and her form. If any heavy and severe disaster has fallen on his riper manhood, and turned the future into a gloomy and unpromising wilderness ; he will feel it bitterly at such a time. Or if it chance that he is grown an old man, and lived to see all that owned his blood, or shared his affections, struck down to the earth like dead leaves in autumn ; in such a night, he will call their dear shades around, and wish himself a shadow.

It is just clearing up; and Oliver, as usual, is in the fidgets to set out—so good by; and for fear you will think I have been indulging my imagination at your expense, about Mrs. B——'s in the mountains, I mention her name, that you may find out the place next summer, and see with your own eyes, and sleep within hearing of one of the most musically melancholy murmuring brooks in all the Alleghanies. Good by.

## LETTER XXIV.

DEAR FRANK,

YOU may chance to recollect, in one of my former letters, I warned you Oliver would ere long break out into an ebullition of geology, occasioned probably by the subterraneous heat of Dr. Hutton's theory, which has already performed such wonders. The expected eruption took place the day before yesterday.

We passed from the little retreat in the mountains I gave you a sketch of in my last, through a country of most singularly romantic aspect. The hills became more rugged, barren, and broken, than any we had yet crossed; the declivities more abrupt; and here and there bare and prodigious masses of rocks were piled on their tops, or hung on their sides. Often we rode along the banks of little rivers, foaming at the depth of a hundred feet below; their sides in many places composed of dark limestone rocks, piled one ledge on another, with the regularity of art, and topped with moss or fern. Cascades, with beautiful basins at their foot, fit haunt for the trout and the Naiad, succeeded each other at every little distance, and the whole scene was calculated to awaken the most lofty and affecting musings. I, who fortunately have never seen Dovedale, Matlock, the lakes of Cumberland, the Welch hills, nor any of those famous

places that make such a figure in the picture-books—I enjoyed this succession of interesting objects, and fell into an enormous brownstudy. But Oliver, who, ever since he became a geologist, is much oftener employed in studying how this world was made, than in enjoying its beauties, ran his hobby-horse against my Kentucky pony, and unhorsed my imagination in a twinkling.

“Do you believe in Hutton, or Werner?” said he.

I believe in Moses and the prophets, replied I.”

“Yes, as to all that sort of thing, we know—that is, we are willing to acknowledge we believe the world was originally made in six days;—but every appearance indicates that the present is a sort of secondary world, made out of the fragments of the first.”

“Oh, certainly—like a giblet pie, from the fragments of a roasted goose.”

“Pshaw! Can’t you be serious on a serious subject? Every man ought to feel an interest in the formation of the planet on which his lot is cast,—the place of his birth, and of his grave. In my opinion, nothing can afford a more noble, as well as useful exercise of the mind, than studying the formation of the earth.”

“Assuredly.—‘Knowledge is power,’ said the great Ham—I beg pardon, Bacon; and there is very little doubt but that, in the regular progress of science, the knowledge of how the world was formed, will shortly be followed by the art of making worlds for ourselves—if we can only find the materials.”

“Confound it! be serious for once;—every man has a right to his hobby, and mine is certainly as innocent and inoffensive as any other.”

“Aye, and as useless;—but come, for once I will be serious. Open your theory, either Neptunian or Plutonian; and let the internal fire be as hot as it may, I’ll not flinch one jot, I promise you.”

He mused a little, and then replied—

“Well, if you won’t talk rationally on geology, what do you think of Captain Symmes’s theory of the concentric spheres?”

“I think it a capital subject for a speculation—not a pecuniary, but a philosophical one, and would believe in it but for one thing.”

“What is that?”

“I can’t bring my mind to it.”

“Pooh!”

We had a long discourse on this interesting subject, in the midst of which we emerged from the recesses of the mountains, and in due time arrived at the little town of Fincastle, where we agreed to sleep. After supper, Oliver again broached his theory, and as we slept in the same room, continued prosing away till I fell fast asleep. The last words I heard him say were, “I should like to know what sort of people they are.”

You know, Frank, what a dreamer I am, and that my sleeping reveries are not unfrequently better than my waking thoughts, which, after all, is not much in their favour. However this may be, I fell asleep with my head full of the captain’s theory, and was

favoured with the following most extraordinary vision. It made such an impression, that it was some moments after waking before I could recollect where I was.

Methought I was in a country somewhere within the concentric spheres, called the Isles of Engines—how I got there I don't recollect, but I found the people all speaking tolerably good English, only with a little of the Welch accent. This they accounted for, by their being descended from the colony brought out by Prince Madoc, as sung in Mr. Southey's epic of that name. The laureate thinks they went to America, but the fact is, if there be any truth in dreams, they found their way, as I was assured, to the pole, where they were drawn through a great opening, by the force of attraction, into the bowels of the earth, where I found their descendants. Finding myself in this interesting situation, I determined to take a nearer view of the people, their manners and customs. But having unfortunately drank too much of the water, which is strongly impregnated with limestone, I soon found myself considerably out of order, and was fain to send for a doctor. When he came, he surprised me at first, by inquiring how many horse-power I was; whether I was on the high or low pressure system; and how many strokes I made in a minute. He then, without waiting for an answer, told me with great gravity, that my boiler was affected, but it was of no consequence, for if nothing had been the matter, he could easily have made me sick.

“You’re but a bungling piece of machinery, at best,” said he, “and must have been made in the infancy of the art; but I shall soon set you going again. Pray who made you?”

I answered according to the catechism. “Pooh,” said he, “I thought as much; that accounts for your defects. You are at least a hundred years behind the spirit of the age. But, as I said before, I shall be able to correct the blunders of the original artist.”

Accordingly he pulled out a little box from his coat-pocket, from which he took a hammer, a chisel, a file, and a little portable furnace, in which was some sort of inflammable spirit, by means of which he set a little steam-engine, of three mice-power, as he said, going at a famous rate. I wondered what he was after, when he said to me—

“Pull off your clothes, my honest friend, and I’ll soon put you to rights.”

I did not know what to make of all this, but thought the doctor a madman. I, however, pulled off my outward garments, to humour him, when he observed that he was right—that the boiler was collapsed a little, and that he should cut out about four inches square that was defective, and had better be got rid of as soon as possible, for fear of accidents. Saying this, he placed his chisel against my side, just below the short ribs, and was going to give it a great blow with his hammer, when I started away from him as fast as possible. He inquired what was the matter, and begged me to keep my fly-wheel quiet, or he

could do nothing, assuring me solemnly, he would not injure my machinery in the least. When I told him that flesh and blood couldn't bear it, he exclaimed, with great contempt—

“Pooh! what do you use such exploded language as that for? only see the force of habit!”

Finding I would not submit to his mode of putting my machinery in order, he called me an ass, and went away muttering to himself, “one of your old exploded inventions, I see.”

He soon returned, however, and feeling my pulse with a steam-cane, which he said contained a sympathetic vibrating rod, that conveyed to his machinery the precise number and strength of the strokes made by the mechanism of the heart, assured me it was the most convenient article in the world.

“It is far preferable to fingers, only it is more expensive, and is apt to be affected by the damp air. This, however, I remedy by a barometer, which, by always showing the state of the atmosphere, corrects all mistakes.”

He held his watch in his hand all the time the cane was feeling my pulse, and I was surprised to find it struck precisely the number of my pulsations.

“You see,” said he, “what ingenious people are those of the Engine Isles, and what a variety of labour-saving machines they have invented. The development of the machinery of mind is wonderful. But come,” added he rather contemptuously, “I see you are one of the clumsy, old-fashioned productions of nature, and we must treat you accordingly. He

then bled me with a steam-lancet, and prescribed a diet of fried liver, which, he assured me, was a sovereign remedy for derangements of that organ. Upon this, he hurried away, as he said, to visit a great nobleman, about seven hundred miles off, whose balance-wheel was out of order. I thought this was a great way to visit a patient, and that the complaint must be a very curious one. On going to the window, however, I saw the doctor get into a great pair of sheet-iron boots, which threw out a deal of steam, and which seemed to be those of the old story-books, for they carried him out of sight in a moment. I saw him no more, being informed that he had been blown up in his journey, and his machinery so much deranged that it was thought it would never be thoroughly repaired. He sent me his bill, however, and a curious one it was, consisting of a dozen items, all about repairing my machinery. I should have mentioned, that though I called him doctor, he disclaimed the title, assuring me he had the honour to be a civil engineer.

Being recovered from my illness, I determined to make some excursions into the city, which I understood was the capital of the Empire of the Engine Isles, and was called Tzig-Tzag. My object was to gain a knowledge of the manners, habits, and customs of the people, in order that I might not return home, as some travellers do, with nothing but a bundle of ignorance and falsehood. The first thing that struck me, was, that there seemed to be two distinct orders of people in this country; one all spirit and activity,

and apparently very happy; the other idle, ragged, melancholy, and poor. These last might be seen lounging about, doing nothing, or drinking and fighting among themselves, in a most outrageous manner. They seemed to be a sort of degraded class, something like our negroes, and never failed to beg me for money, whenever I came nigh them. The other class seemed to look down upon them, and though they would relieve their necessities when asked, the money appeared to be given without charity, and received without gratitude.

When I sometimes inquired concerning their distresses, and why, being apparently able-bodied men, they came to be so poor, their answers puzzled me strangely. One said his distresses were owing to a plentiful harvest; another, to free trade; a third, to the restriction of the issues of one pound notes; a fourth, to the great plenty of paper-money; a fifth, to being over head-and-ears in debt; a sixth, to taxation; a seventh, to tithes; and an eighth, to political economy. "They want to teach us to starve scientifically," said this last—"but starving is starving, whether philosophically or not." But what puzzled me more than all the rest, was a poor fellow, who swore to me solemnly, that he was ruined by gaining a lawsuit.

When I inquired of these men why they did not go to work, they told me they could find nothing to do half the time, and the other half their wages would not keep them from want. The Engine men had taken the bread out of their mouths. I asked a poor

woman, who came begging to me for money to buy a pair of stockings, why she did not knit them for herself. She answered with tears in her eyes, "Alas! sir, the engines make them cheaper than we can buy the materials."

The proportion of these poor idle people seemed to me as fifty to one of the brisk, lively class, and yet the former seemed so depressed by poverty, or by a sense of inferiority, that they quietly submitted either to starvation or beggary. I one day rambled out into the country a few miles, where I saw a man washing clothes by steam, and two or three women sitting, perfectly idle, looking on. While I was strolling along wondering at these things, my attention was caught by a singular equipage, in which sat a lady and gentleman, whirling along the high road like the wind. On inquiring, I found he had made a great bet that he could outrun any north-easter in the world,—and truly he seemed in a fair way of winning, for he beat a shower of rain, that was coming on in his rear, all hollow.

I next met a carriage, which puzzled me exceedingly, as the poor horses were fastened behind instead of before. This seemed a practical illustration of the cart before the horse. On inquiring the reason, I was told that the only use of horses in the Engine Isles, was to keep the locomotives from running away. "They are excellent creatures," said my informant, "for preventing our carriages from going too fast." A little farther on I came to a graveyard, where was a steam-shovel digging graves,

while two sturdy fellows were playing all-fours on a tombstone. One of them told me they were digging on speculation, and that they could dig graves enough in a week to accommodate the whole city for a year. But he was afraid they would be ruined if the season turned out healthy.

Returning home, I overtook an honest fellow driving a pair of oxen, which he begged me to accept with tears in his eyes. I asked why he did not go to market and sell them—"Ah! sir," said the poor man, "nobody will buy them; they are worth nothing now; they can't live upon steam, nor travel fifty miles an hour on a rail-road." I next encountered a sailor-looking man, who begged charity of me. I asked him how he came to be in want. "Why, sir," said he, "I owned a steam-boat, and plied with passengers and marketing to the great city yonder. But since the invention of the magnetic boats, which you know sail at the rate of a thousand miles an hour, I cannot earn salt to my porridge, if I had any, and all my neighbours, who own steam-boats, are starving."

Scarcely had I parted from this unfortunate skipper, when another poor ragged fellow made a demonstration on my pocket. He had managed to get a tolerable living on a canal, but unfortunately the canal had lately been cut out by a rail-road, and he was now in want of bread. While we were yet conversing, a third person came up who was quite as badly off as the other. He had just been discharged from the rail-road, where he had been employed, in consequence of a great improvement in

balloons, by means of which all the speculators in rail-roads were ruined, and he himself thrown on the community a pauper.

Passing on, I entered the city, and coming to a barber's shop, went in to get shaved. There I saw about a dozen people sitting on a bench, all in a row, with napkins about their necks, and was told to take my seat at one end. I did so, and presently the barber cried out, "Is the steam up?" "Yes sir," was the answer, and on the instant, I heard a strange noise over head, and felt a razor applied to my chin. I was shaved in an instant, as if by magic. On complimenting the master of the shop, on this expeditious process, he told me he could shave twenty thousand people in a day, but was in a fair way of being ruined for want of a sufficient number of beards, since the fashion of whiskers came up. I asked him what the other shavers did for a living—"Oh," replied he, carelessly, "they can go upon the parish."

Not long after this I asked a poor woman to wash some linen for me, but she declined on account of having no steam-engine for the purpose. She said the steam-engines did their work so cheap, she could not keep herself alive by labouring ever so hard, and she might just as well starve in idleness as work her fingers to the bone, and starve after all. "If I was only an engine," said she, "I should be as happy as the day is long—but lack-a-day! I am only one of God's creatures." I did not understand this, any more than a hundred other things I saw every day.

One evening I was invited by a little Welchman,

who had taken a great fancy to me, to accompany him to a concert, where was to be exhibited a newly invented instrument of one hundred and twenty fiddlers' power. All the musical instruments go by steam here, and are estimated by their mechanical power. Accordingly, I went with him, and found the company all sitting in the open air, and consisting of the better sort of people, that is to say, the brisk, lively, fast travelling, and prosperous class, I noticed before. All the instruments going by steam, there were no musicians, properly speaking, each instrument having a chief-engineer and fireman to attend upon it. When the great instrument of one hundred and twenty fiddlers' power began to play, the company seemed quite enchanted, but I confess it made such a horrible noise, that I was fain to stop both my ears. Upon this they set me down a barbarian, and I could hear, in the pauses of the storm of music, whispers passing from one to another, "What an unfinished piece of machinery." "It must be an old-fashioned anatomy of a man, such as we use here for charitable purposes." And thereupon they all, the ladies in particular, turned up their noses and took snuff at me, out of snuff-boxes that opened by steam. I did not comprehend their sneezes, but nevertheless, felt rather ashamed of myself.

While the company, with the exception of myself and one other, an old man with a gray head, sat rapturously enjoying themselves, the boiler of the great musical instrument of one hundred and twenty fiddlers' power, suddenly exploded with an awful

crash, a hundred times louder and more discordant than one of those at the end of a fashionable overture. It filled the air with scalding vapour ; luckily for me, I sat at some distance, but, notwithstanding, was projected into a heap of mortar, where I received little or no damage. Extricating myself as well as I could, and as soon as possible, and the vapour having in a great degree cleared away, I went to assist the unfortunate sufferers, if any remained alive. To my astonishment, I found them all laughing ready to split their sides. One lady cried out that her cotepaly was ruined ; another her beret spoiled ; and a third that her curls were deranged by the damps. They all, however, in reply to various inquiries of the gentlemen, declared that their machinery was not in the least injured.

Finding this to be the state of affairs, I was marching homewards, not relishing this sort of music, when I heard a groan, or something very like it, near me. On looking about, I perceived the old gentleman I mentioned just now lying under one of the benches, which were all moved about by machinery, at the pleasure of the person sitting on them. He seemed to be struggling with pain, or something else, and I tried to get him out, but could not. One of the gentlemen near me, however, with an exclamation of contempt, immediately stopped the engine, which propelled the seat, and released the old gentleman's leg, which I found had been caught by one of the wheels, and very much bruised. Finding he was considerably hurt, and, that instead of pitying him,

the people only shrugged their shoulders and muttered, "anatomy," I took pity on the poor old man, and carried him home to my lodgings, where he got well in about ten days, during which time we formed a great friendship.

This worthy gentleman was a philosopher of the old school, that is, he belonged to the old-fashioned fellows made on anatomical principles. He told me the Engine Isles were governed according to political economy, which would be the most useful science in the world, if they could only agree about first principles. We got to be very fond of each other, and at length agreed to travel together, not only over the Engine Isles, but to a vast country at a considerable distance, called the Republic of Elsewhere. Accordingly, having each purchased a pair of steam-boats, we set out on our journey early one morning.

As I had always a great respect for learning and science, you know, though I have no pretensions to either myself, I took particular pleasure in visiting the societies, and attending the lectures of distinguished professors, whenever I had an opportunity. Having travelled the first day three hundred miles, without the least fatigue, we stopped at the great city of Oxhorn, a famous place for scholars, and all that sort of thing. Here we were told a great professor was just about delivering a lecture, and having refreshed ourselves in haste, were conducted to the college, a fine venerable old building as ever I saw. Having paid the price of admittance—for my companion told me they gave away nothing in this country

but advice—we were accommodated with comfortable seats.

I found the professor had just commenced a lecture on the drawing of corks. He began by describing the primitive modes—forks, fingers, teeth, etc. Then he proceeded to give a history of the progressive improvements, from the worm, to the patent, and the *ne plus ultra*, until he came to the consummation of all, the steam-corkscrew, which he maintained was the greatest discovery of the age, seeing that the saving of time was immense. “A man,” said he, “can drink two bottles now, while he used to be drawing a cork!”

On our return we called for our supper, which came rolling into the room by steam. I was puzzled about the use of certain strange-looking things laying by the sides of the plates instead of knives and forks, and on inquiring of the waiter, found they were what he called “a mechanical process for swallowing without any trouble.”

“If you get out of breath with eating, notwithstanding this great invention,” continued he, “you will find on the sideboard a machine for breathing without exercising the lungs.”

I was very much astonished at this, but soon found other matters to call my attention. All the doors opened and shut of themselves, as they told me, by the rarification of the air produced by its passing through a perpetual oven.

The next day we went to church, where we found all the people listening with the most profound atten-

tion, to a description of a machine for making tooth-picks, which performed the work of two hundred able-bodied men.

After the sermon we walked out into the country, and saw a man busy in experimenting on a machine for raising water by means of the sunbeams. Another was making a blast furnace, by the action of a fall of water. Passing on a little way farther, we came to where three hundred men were sitting idle by a machine for making cables. "What a prodigious saving of labour?" said a fat fellow, who, I was told, was making a great fortune by it, while the three hundred lookers-on were starving on low wages, or in total idleness. In answer to my companion, who made a smart reply to something I said, I observed, "That was a retort courteous." "A retort courteous!" said the fat owner of the labour-saving machine, "I never heard of such a retort—pray can you show me a plan of it?"

On our return, being somewhat fatigued, the waiter handed us the machine for breathing without exercising the lungs, which the old gentleman was delighted with, but somehow or other, I thought it was more trouble than pleasure.

In the evening we heard of a lecture to be delivered by one of the greatest philosophers and machinists in all the Isles of Engines, and determined to be present without fail. Accordingly we proceeded thither, and found the professor delivering a lecture on man-making. I was astonished on hearing him, in treating the subject, use all the language and terms generally

adopted in our country in the description of steam-engines. If he spoke of anatomy, it was only to stigmatize it as an old exploded invention. But my astonishment was increased tenfold, when, at the conclusion of his lecture, he proceeded to illustrate his doctrines by making a man according to the present improved system, as he denominated it. After putting the machinery together, the new being took the place of the professor, and repeated over his lecture without missing a word.

On expressing my wonder, at this phenomenon, my companion opened his eyes wider than even mine.

“What,” said he—“is it possible you have been so long in this country, and are still ignorant that a great portion, nay, all the better sort of people here, are mere machines?”

“What do you mean?” said I.

“I mean that such people as you and I, have been out of fashion here some time, and that none but the poor starving creatures you see looking at machinery, belong to the ancient plebeian class of flesh and blood. The whole political system, as it exists at present, in the Engine Isles, and the vast power of the nation, turns exclusively on the superiority of these men-machines over the men constructed on the old anatomical principles.”

“How do you make that out?” said I.

“I’ll tell you. You must know the Isles of Engines are so overburdened with these anatomical people, that one-half of them can’t live comfortably. The

professors of the noble science of political economy—have you never heard of political economy?”

“No—but I’ve heard of domestic economy.”

“Pish!—what has domestic economy to do with national affairs? well—the professors of political economy went to work to prove that it would remedy all these evils of a surplus population, if they could only throw a large portion of the poor labouring classes out of employment. They would then, without doubt, starve to death, and there would be an end of them. According to this doctrine, the invention of labour-saving machinery became the sole object of all the ingenuity of these islanders. They proceeded step by step, increasing the labour-saving machines, and throwing the labourers out of employment, until finally the learned professor we have just heard, conceived and brought to maturity these men-machines, who have almost entirely superseded the old anatomical men, who, in the course of a few years, in all probability, will become extinct, by a process of misery and starvation. I belong to this class, and feel my degradation; but I cannot but admire the vast ingenuity of my countrymen, who have thus created a power, which has actually conquered themselves.”

I could not help thinking the old gentleman was one of the most disinterested persons I had ever met with, and began now to comprehend many things I had before seen, which puzzled me exceedingly at the time.

“This must be one of the happiest countries in the

world," said I, "except for the great majority of old-fashioned men. But I suppose they will soon be all starved to death."

"Why they ought to have been long ago, but somehow they seem able to live upon nothing."

"What a happy country!" said I again.

"The happiest in the world," replied he, "The end of every wise government should be to diminish the value of human labour, and make men unnecessary. But alas! we are, after all, far behind our neighbours, the *Whiz-Gigs*, among whom every thing is done by perpetual motion."

"Let us visit them, by all means," cried I.

"Agreed!" said the old philosopher, and accordingly the next day we set out for the Empire of Perpetual Motion. But our journey was cut short by my being suddenly alarmed by a horrible outcry, which proceeded from my friend Oliver. I jumped up, and shaking him awake, asked what was the matter.

"I was dreaming of Symmes's theory," said he, "and fancied myself turned into a magnetic needle, that would not traverse."

What a strange coincidence, Frank, that we should both have been dreaming of the same thing! Adieu.

## LETTER XXV.

DEAR FRANK,

THE town of Fincastle, in the county of Bostetourt, where I mentioned our arrival in my last, is situated in one of the most picturesque parts of the state, and the earth seems to have been in great commotion when she finally settled her atoms in these parts. It abounds in iron ore, and is finely watered by the different branches of James river, which are here called creeks, but in any other country would aspire to the title of rivers.

This town, like Rome, is situated on several little hills, and has a stream running nigh, pretty nearly equal to the Tiber, only not quite so muddy, except when it rains. From thence you have a full view of the far-famed Peaks of Otter, towering high above the surrounding mountains; one rising to a point, the other flattened at the top. From the former, which is the highest of the two, I am told the prospect is exceedingly extensive, various, and magnificent. We were inclined to try the ascent—Oliver, to see if he could find any oyster-beds, and I to see what was to be seen; but relinquished this undertaking on the score of distance and difficulty; the mountain being fourteen miles out of our way, and the

ascent laborious. There is no enjoyment to be gained at the summit of a mountain, when one gets there half-tired to death. The cost is generally more than the gratification, although people who take the trouble don't like to acknowledge themselves disappointed.

While dinner was getting ready, we strolled about the town to look for curiosities ; but unless one is a scientific traveller, he will be at a loss to find matter to fill up a letter in our country, unless he tells over again the same stories that have been a hundred times repeated already. A scientific traveller, like you know who, can talk a full hour about a stone picked up in the road, or a plant plucked from the side of a ditch. It is only to call it schistus, quartz, talc, calcareous, argillaceous, or granitic, if it be a stone ; or *juniperius virginiana*, *yucca alofolia*, *corypha umbraculifera*, or *nigra oblonga*, if it be a plant ; and the reader becomes wonderfully interested in stones and plants, that he has seen every day of his life, but without knowing they were of such infinite consequence. After thus christening them with a long Latin name, the scientific traveller looks into the Encyclopedia, for the article botany, or mineralogy, and borrows enough to astonish every body with his learning, and make a notable paper for the transactions of one of the numerous societies to which he belongs. But to a traveller unacquainted with the secret of being learned without knowing any thing of the subject, it is a sad drawback, that almost every thing he sees in our country indicates a rapid advance, rather than a state of decay. Consequently there is

nothing that makes amends for its present insignificance, by its ancient renown, or which the dapper spruce gentleman traveller can tell over again for the hundredth time. There are no old castles to conjure up the recollection of William the Bastard's time, when the old barons had more manors than manners—oppressed the people, rebelled against the king, and drank small-beer for breakfast. Indeed, your traveller in the old countries has a great advantage over him of the new world. The latter has nothing but what he sees to describe, and nothing but what he thinks and feels to record; whereas the former can make a book of travels, good enough for his readers, without either seeing or thinking at all. Every town through which he passes has a regular history, called a "Picture," written expressly for his particular use. In these you will find the history of the dead and the living; descriptions of all the tombs in all the churchyards, visible and invisible, past and present; biographical notices of Messrs. Tom, Dick, and Harry, together with their illustrious cotemporaries, tag, rag, and bobtail, and all their posterity. In addition to these valuable and interesting particulars, he is furnished with a regular list of the bishops, mayors, abbots, aldermen, sextons, church-wardens, grave-diggers, and catchpolls, for at least a thousand years. This assortment is completed by a list of various other articles too tedious to mention, as the grocers say in their advertisements. Out of all this, the greatest dunce in the world, that is to say, the traveller who sells his own land to go

and see that of other people, can make a book which will be praised by the critics, provided it is written by a gentleman belonging to their *party*, or is published by the bookseller who patronizes their Review. It will also, most likely, be republished in this country, where all the second-hand finery, and second-rate literature of England finds a ready market. But the unlucky souls who travel in our country, unless they are possessed of the great secret of being scientific a la Encyclopedie, will find themselves at a loss for interesting particulars, unless they can enter into the various shades and peculiarities which distinguish one people from another, even though they are ever so much alike, which, by the way, is no easy thing. For want of this nice perception, which is one of the great characteristics of genius, those literary foreigners who have done us the honour to ride post through our country, have supplied the lack of antiquities, and the talent for observation, by resorting to their imagination for facts, and to their memory for good stories and rare adventures, that have happened regularly to every one of them from time immemorial.

Of all countries in the world, this, therefore, is the worst for a book-making traveller, and itinerant poet. Ruins inspire both the one and the other; and a ruined tower or ivied hall is as good as six pages to each. Traditionary antiquity gives interest to the smallest trifles; and the most insignificant persons become objects of interest by living a long time ago, just as old Jenkins became immortalized, by living

longer than other people. Until, therefore, we have a good number of ruins, with subterranean passages, and "Donjon Keeps," for our poets to commit murders, and our travellers to locate legends in, I despair of our excelling in these *articles*: as our friend the dry-good merchant calls poets and travellers.

This being the case, my learned friend—for learned thou art by this time, if thou hast read all my letters—we found very little to interest us at this place, except here and there in the outskirts of the town, a ruined log-cabin, deserted for a better, or abandoned for the western country. It would puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer to make a romance out of a log-hut; but by a rare good luck, I met with a legend, the subject of which is as follows:

When George the First was imported from Hanover, to take possession of the English crown, as usual a crowd of his poor relations accompanied him, to get a slice of Johnny Bull's roast beef, which was rather more plenty then than it is now. Among these was a sad fellow, called Kierst Von Guelph, who, by the time he had been half a year in England, had committed so many foul and unnatural murders on the king's English, that for fear of a rising among the genuine old Britons, who took umbrage at his calling things out of their right names, he was sent out to Virginia, with a grant of land and permission to murder every word of the language in cold blood. When he arrived in this new world, he built himself a house of logs, the ruins of which are still visible; called his first son George Rex, in compliment to his

great relation ; fell foul of the language tooth and nail, and under pretence of being of the blood royal, claimed a right to make all the people talk High Dutch, the language of Adam, as he stoutly affirmed. But it is no easy matter to change the language of a whole people, so he contented himself with turning it upside down. Thus P became B, and B became P, and D, T, until the stoutest abecedarian could hardly tell which was which. Kierst Von Guelph lived in his log-palace until he had fairly bedevilled the language, and his palace was near *dumbling* about his ears, when he gave it the slip just in time to save himself the trouble of building another. It was he that demonstrated his loyalty, we are told, by calling so many places in Virginia, and the south, after the kings, queens, princes, and lords of his time, instead of giving them better, or leaving them as they were. Tradition says, he lies buried in the churchyard of this town ; and this is rendered more probable by our finding a piece of gray freestone lying there, bearing this fragment of an inscription : “ *Here licht begraven K——* ” and there it ends abruptly.

Be this as it may, this legend undoubtedly explains the true original cause why the majority of the people in the great valley, extending from Pennsylvania to Georgia, begin so many of their words with the wrong letter, a peculiarity which puzzled our friend the professor of all sorts of sciences, to such a degree, that he would most certainly have lost his wits, had not Providence, wisely foreseeing how the poor man

would be perplexed at divers times about nothing, benevolently made him without any.

A handsome new church is building at this place, another proof that our parson was mistaken when he told aunt Kate there was no religion in Virginia. I love to see traces of religion, for in its train follow habits of order and sobriety, that make some amends for the cant and monkish severity, attempted to be imposed upon us by so many of the beardless apostles of the present day; who, in their zeal to put down the innocent amusements of life, seem to forget that vice, and not amusement, is the proper object of pulpit criticism. It is curious, as it is true, that among our aged pastors, whose years confer authority, whose whitened locks, and blameless lives, and long-established character, give them a right to speak with all the authority of experience and virtue, we find religion represented in the beautiful and alluring garb of chaste and innocent vivacity. As drawn by their pencils, she enjoins no stripes or sackcloth, nor calls for any sacrifices at her shrine, but those of vice and immorality. But our beardless youth, when first they essay their powers from the pulpit, appear to think they must signalize themselves by some extraordinary innovation on the rights of their parishioners, or some new and stricter principles, than their liberal and virtuous predecessors thought sufficient for the welfare of mankind, here and hereafter. Experience has long since taught these aged pastors, that mankind must have amusements, or they will indulge vices; that by rendering the yoke of religion

too heavy, it is apt to be cast away; and that overheated or overacted zeal is a more dangerous enemy to the church, in an enlightened age at least, than even the most inflexible unbelief.

The younger race of preachers, on the contrary, are, many of them, heard to rail with a sort of senseless impetuosity, against all that adorns, embellishes, and sweetens the leisure hours of an existence, which, at best, is but a succession of labours. With an utter and monkish ignorance of human nature, they think themselves reforming it, by lopping away its flowers; and with an arrogance to which I feel too much respect for their calling to apply the proper epithet, they call down reprobation on the heads of their aged parishioners, because they have permitted their children to partake of those amusements, and visit those places of polished recreation, heretofore considered innocent. Nay, I have heard one of these beardless reformers strike at the root of domestic happiness, by telling his female hearers they paid too much attention to household affairs, and too little to the church: thus attempting to elevate them to that true evangelical uselessness, which signalizes itself by neglecting every sublunary duty, and is manifested in an affected contempt for this world, which, were it universal, would tear society asunder, and cast its dear and admirable elements to the winds of Heaven. The author of the religion of man, who gave reason to his creatures, and harmony to the universe, thought one day of the seven, if properly attended to, sufficient for the purposes of *public*

*worship*; but our zealous and boyish reformers, it seems, know better. Nowhere, in all the compass of Holy Writ, is there any precept denouncing those amusements, that cannot, by any fallacy of reasoning, be in any way connected with abstract morals, or prohibiting the mind from recreating, and polishing, and enlightening its original roughness and darkness. By whose authority, then, does arrogant conceited ignorance try to wean us from every thing that charms us in the works of genius, because it shames their frothy and vapid nonsense by its enchanting beauty, or because it is not a sermon? It is in this way that the preacher becomes the ally of ignorance, and that the mighty masters of literature are robbed of their crowns of laurel, to bestow on some production of Miss Hannah More, in which the most improbable fiction of imagination is coupled with the majesty of eternal truth.

These sentiments, were they known, would doubtless bring my orthodoxy in question, and scandalize aunt Kate, who, you know, neglects all her household duties, rather than not go to a night meeting. I care not; for no fear of misrepresentation shall prevent me from speaking my sentiments on this conspiracy against the smiles, and sports, and graces of the mind and body. I believe that the writers of the Scriptures were inspired, and can only lament that those to whose lot it falls to interpret them, are not equally inspired; for then we should not have so many contradictory systems. I am unalterably convinced of the divinity of religion; a thousand proofs of it

are implanted in the nature of man: and it is not the least demonstration of its being upheld by an Almighty influence, that it continues to flourish and expand, in spite of the little support derived either from the precepts or examples of its new teachers.

Having two or three hours to spare till dinner, we rambled about the churchyard, reading the records of mortality, which, though everywhere confined to a few simple items, concerning a few insignificant people, are always interesting. They are the history of high and low; and none can read them without being impressed with a conviction that all are his brothers at last—for all die. He who moulders below was born,—and died; and whether rich, or a beggar, his short history is that of kings. The struggles of restless ambition,—the reverses of the great,—and the story of the wreck of lofty pride, we read as an interesting romance, addressing itself solely to the imagination: but when a monarch or a hero dies, he becomes our equal; his death is an example equally with that of the meanest mortal; and we here realize our common nature, and common end.

While pouring over these tomb-stones, our attention was attracted by a long cavalcade, on foot, on horseback, and in carriages of various kinds, winding slowly over one of the hills at a distance. It came towards the churchyard, entered it, and stopped at a large oak, under which was a newly dug grave we had not noticed before. The people of the village were attracted by it, and came up, one after another,

until there were, I suppose, two hundred, men, women, and children, gathered together. Without a whisper, except that of the oaks around, the coffin was taken from the wagon, lowered into the grave, and covered with earth. I never witnessed a scene more solemn and affecting; and beautiful as is our church funeral service, I will venture to say it never raised a feeling of more deep and awful devotion, than that which impressed the dead silence around. There was no need of saying "dust to dust;" every clod of earth, as it fell hollowly on the coffin, proclaimed that; neither was any proof wanting that "man who is born of a woman," must die, for a thousand little hillocks around gave silent testimony to the fact. When the mound over the grave was smoothed with pious care, a little buzzing ran through the crowd—and as it slowly separated, some ventured to talk about the deceased person, who was, I found, a Quaker woman, who died—as others die, of some common malady or other. She was neither a belle, nor a beauty;—no crowd ever followed her at a ball, nor could I learn that she had ever received a single offer of marriage, except from the person we had left still standing by her grave. Yet there was something in the story I learned of her, that affected me, I can hardly tell why, for it was not the least romantic.

It seems that her husband, in consequence of imprudence or misfortune, had several years before been confined in a prison for debt, leaving a family of eight children destitute. By the rare magic of

industry and economy united, this woman, by her own labours, kept the little ones together,—fed, clothed, and sent them to school, until the gaol accidentally took fire, and the prisoner walked home. Here he afterwards remained unmolested, for the virtues of his wife had sanctified his person. There is a species of calm, persevering, courageous, and unconquerable industry, that gets the better even of fate. Such, it seems, was the industry of this valuable woman, and it was rewarded even in this world. She lived—God bless her—to see her husband independent, and to share many years of independence with him. She reared all her children, saw them honourably settled, and heard the old people say, that whatever had been her sacrifices for them, they had repaid her, by their dutiful affection, and exemplary conduct. Then, when she at last died, neither poet made her an angel nor newspaper eulogy a saint; but the neighbours,—the *neighbours*, followed her to the grave without uttering a word,—and the husband and children stood round it with their faces covered.

Now if this little true story wants a moral, I think it will easily be found. For my part, I cannot help believing this simple Quaker woman was a more valuable being, and fulfilled her duties far more to the benefit of society, than if she had been a member of as many charitable societies as aunt Kate, and had refused as many fools as a lady I once heard of in Virginia. I must own, too, that I consider her silent, unobtrusive suffering, fireside virtue, as far preferable to the public and ostentatious newspaper

charity, which, in the present time, stalks bravely forth, and beckons every worthless vagabond to its shrine, from Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. Had all women been like our Quaker, there had been little need of these societies; nor had so many excellent ladies neglected their homes to prowl into the dens of profligate vice, and soil the purity of the female heart, by an habitual contemplation of the disgusting drama of human misery, brought on by human depravity. It is thus they increase, instead of diminish, the sum of vice and misery, by teaching idleness and profligacy to become more idle and vicious, in the certainty that in the last resort, they can live without either virtue or work, in this charitable age.

Do not accuse me, I beseech you, Frank, of a lack of commiseration for the wants and woes of our fellow-creatures. I have lived long enough to know, that to relieve the distresses of the deserving, without encouraging the wickedness of the profligate, is a very difficult matter, and requires a knowledge of the world and its corruptions, which I do most earnestly hope our mothers, wives, sisters and daughters, may never attain. I have seen enough, too, of life, at different times, and amid occupations the most various, to convince me that nothing is so likely to make this a happy world, as for every one to confine themselves to the care of making the domestic band around them happy. The exercise of benevolence, when too widely spread, is apt to lose sight of the centre, in solicitude for the extremes of the mighty

circle. Few people have either the means or the talent for producing a great public good, or ameliorating the situation of mankind in general; but all have a little sphere over which their influence is felt, and which they may do a great deal to make happy or wretched. Society is composed of these little worlds; and to make them comfortable is to create the happiness of all mankind. These observations apply more especially to women, who have always duties to perform at home, if they choose to attend to them, and ought to leave public charities to men, who are acquainted with the innumerable masks under which idleness and vice levy contributions on society.

In truth, I have no opinion of this *gadding* benevolence in woman. She is a gentle household divinity: she is neither a Jove, to direct the destinies of the world; nor a Neptune, to quell the raging ocean. She reigns over the happiness of man, not by leading armies, writing essays on suicide, or vindicating the right of women to be as vicious and immodest as men,—or by enlisting in a blue-stocking club,—or by diving into stews and beer-cellars, to acquire views of vice, which the most virtuous woman cannot witness without soiling the purity of her heart. No, Frank, it is not by such means that women become the source and sacred fountain of our happiness. It is by the exercise of those gentle female virtues that pass unheeded by the world; that excite no buzz of public applause, and cause no inflated biography to be indited; but which meet their reward in the grati-

tude of children, the smiling happiness of the domestic circle, the lofty and affectionate estimation of the husband, and the blessing of Heaven. Such women may not, perhaps, get into the chronicles; but while they live, they will be the blessing of their home; when they die, tears of bitter sorrow will be their eulogy; and their monuments, a crowd of neighbours and relatives standing silently weeping by their graves. Good by.

## LETTER XXVI.

DEAR FRANK,

I ONCE knew a worthy old lady, who never saw or heard any thing in this world that did not put her in mind of Joseph in Egypt. Whenever any thing was told her, no matter what, she would take a pinch of snuff, and exclaim with a devotional air, "Ah! that puts me in mind of Joseph in Egypt." Nobody could tell why; but so it was; and so it sometimes happens with me—for seeing a picture of Joseph in Egypt hanging in the room this evening, it actually put me in mind of writing you a letter. By what concatenation or dislocation of ideas this was brought about, I have not just now leisure to explain, having other matters on hand.

We left Fincastle about eight days ago, and set forth up the great valley between the Blue Ridge and the Allegany, which must needs be called a valley, because it lies between two mountains. It is, however, in every part, too wide to accord with my ideas of a valley, and has mountains in the very centre of it. In addition to its various beauties, it contains the Natural Bridge, the Cave I mentioned formerly, and leads to Harper's Ferry, affording thus as many attractions to the tourist as perhaps any portion of the United States. It is all limestone

country; and where this prevails, the landscapes, I have observed, are always rich, variegated, and picturesque, and the earth fruitful. One day or other, when the roads in this part of the world shall become better, and the accommodations more comfortable, this region, I doubt not, will be resorted to from various parts, from motives of pleasure, health, or curiosity, by the idle, the invalid, and the fashionable.

After riding something more than a dozen miles, we struck upon James river, upwards of four hundred miles from its mouth, here a clear, deep, and gentle stream, navigable for large batteaux. We crossed it by a toll-bridge, and skirted it for some distance, till we came to a little town, the name of which I forget. The sun was just setting behind a high mountain, which comes to an untimely end just as it strikes the river; and its last rays fell on the sides of another ridge, into which the river quietly steals, and loses itself just below the village. Boats were lying along the beach, and wagons standing on the bank, the conductors of which were exchanging various characteristic jokes, levelled at each other's occupations. It was the old story of Mrs. Grundy and Dame Ashfield over and over again. Walking along the bank in the dusk of the evening, we heard them discussing the various merits of canoes and wagons, and telling most enormous stories of being stuck in the mud, or shooting rapids, some of which I would tell you over again, but that a good story in a batteaux don't do to tell everywhere. We slept at the house of a good Frenchman, who keeps a

store, and sells every thing, except his politeness, which he gives away to all like an honest fellow.

This is one of the many little towns we find in almost every part of this country, founded, I presume, upon *speculation*. It looks sadly like a rickety bantling, especially about the lower extremity, where there are several houses that exhibit, in and out, the genuine livery of poverty. It is a shame to tempt people from the wholesome labours of the field, and the enjoyment of a moderate independence, by puffing forth the speculative advantages of some little nook or corner along the river-side, where a town is founded—upon speculation—grows for a little while with inauspicious rapidity—then lingers awhile between life and death, and then sinks into a modern ruin, leaving the poor deluded adventurers high and dry on the shore, or rather steeped in poverty to the very lips. I don't absolutely say this is the case with the place I am speaking of, but it looks very *suspicious*; and I fear nothing but the modern *magnum bonum*, or philosopher's stone, to wit, a paper bank, can save it from going the way of all flesh. I would advise the legislature of Virginia to *locate*, as the phrase is, one of the contemplated litter of banks at this place, else, to use the words of Shakspeare, as Oliver does the classics—to suit my present purpose,

The uncap't domes, the mouldering palisades,  
 The unroof'd *temples*, nay, the globe itself—  
 (I mean the *sign* that creaks before the door)  
 With all its store of whiskey, shall exhale,  
 And like a baseless dream of speculation,  
 Leave many a wreck (I mean of boats) behind.

I was roused early in the morning, but whether before sunrise or not, I could not tell, on account of a thick fog, common along these rivers, but which the lady of the house assured us was not unhealthy. All I can say is, it made me feel so aguish, that I began to comprehend the necessity of antifogmatics, very clearly, for a man in a fog. I'll tell you a secret, if you'll promise not to repeat it—I actually took a mint-julep sily, while Oliver was cogitating over a piece of flint, which had stuck in his horse's hoof the evening before. I do believe he can see further into a millstone than most people. Thus prepared, I encountered the fog manfully, to oblige Oliver, whose impatience to see the Natural Bridge very naturally increased as we approached its neighbourhood. At about twelve o'clock we came to the house of a very merry and respectable gentleman, who cracks jokes, plays the fiddle, and condescends to entertain travellers, I believe more to accommodate the public than for gain; for he has a great farm, and every thing around him gives token of a goodly independence.

Being now within hail, we set out before dinner to see the bridge, distant, they say, a mile and a half, though it appeared to me at least six. Our guide was a most ancient and venerable Hessian, who, to use his own expression, was "*rented*" out to the King of England, by the legitimate Prince of Hesse Castle, to cut the throats of people who never did him any injury, and never certainly came in his way, being at a distance of some four thousand miles. For this

pleasant and Christian-like job, he received fourpence three farthings per day, his royal highness the Prince of Hesse deducting one penny farthing from the sixpence paid him by King George for the *privilege* of fighting the rebels. The old man acted as some of the heroes of chivalry did before him, when young ladies used to go about tilting in armour, disguised. He first fought and then fell in love with this blooming youthful land, and when the war was over, quietly remained behind, leaving King George to settle the account with his master as well as he could. He is "high gravel blind," like Launcelot Gobbo's father, and, like a true cicerone, destroys the effort of a sudden surprise, by telling you that you *will* be surprised by approaching the bridge without knowing it. The consequence is, that you approach cautiously, and to the great mortification of honest cicerone, are not surprised at all, by the suddenness of its appearance.

The late President Jefferson deserves the ill-will of every traveller in this part of the world, by having in his Notes on Virginia, a work now become classical, given a description of this bridge, so provokingly happy, so inexcusably correct, that none can expect to rival him, and therefore the less I say about it the better. All I will venture upon is, that as I looked down into the gulf from above, my knees shook under me ; and as I looked up, from below, at its sweeping arch, blue as the Heavens that appeared above, and everlasting as the earth beneath, I was struck with a feeling of sublimity which no object I have ever

seen had hitherto inspired. We cannot measure the extent of our feelings of the sublime, by calculating the dimensions of any object; it is the effect, and not the cause, that furnishes the criterion of sublimity; and there is often in the arrangements of nature, something which produces a feeling independent of magnitude and dimensions, either by its simplicity, its aspect, its appearance of eternal duration, or its immeasurable superiority over similar works of man.

This is peculiarly the case with the Natural Bridge, which unites all those sources of the sublime. Its simplicity is admirable—it is one single blue, white-veined arch, unbroken and unornamented; its aspect is that of severe and adamantine hardness—unbroken by a single fissure, and indicating a duration without end—while its name and its uses cause a direct comparison between this lofty work of nature and the works of art erected for similar purposes. The result of this comparison, which crosses the mind quick as lightning, is a feeling of the sublime, more definite than that caused by the contemplation of natural objects, which do not challenge this direct and inevitable comparison with the productions of art. All the views of the Natural Bridge that I have seen are utterly deficient in conveying a tolerable idea of the general aspect and expression of this admirable scene, which seems calculated to mortify the pride of man, by proving that neither his imagination or his art is capable of conveying even a remote idea of its majestic beauty.

Some *leaden* genius, I know not who, has erected

a little wooden sentry-box on the top of the bridge, about the centre of the arch, and intersected it by a canvas tube reaching from the top to the bottom, thus destroying the unity of effect both above and below. His object was to make *shot*, although I am told there is no lead within half a thousand miles, except what may, peradventure, be detected in that part of his skull where other people's brains are usually found.

On our return, mine host played us a tune on the fiddle ; beat Oliver at backgammon ; cracked a joke or two upon *cicerone* ; gave us a stout dinner, and packed us off right merrily on our way. By-the-by, a traveller ought never to laugh till he gets to the end of his day's journey, as there is no knowing what may happen by the way. A proof of this is, we got caught in a shower before we arrived at Lexington, and were in such a hurry to get there, that we missed admiring a very charming country until next morning, when the fog was so thick, that I am credibly informed a west country wagoner, in crossing over the Blue Ridge, ran plump into the face of the blessed sun, and gave him a sore bruise. This explains the veritable cause of the spot which has given so much uneasiness, as I perceive, to the supervisors of that glorious luminary. Farewell. I expect to find a letter from you at Staunton.

## LETTER XXVII.

DEAR FRANK,

OUR worthy friend, brother Jonathan, though a pretty high-spirited independent fellow in most respects, has a mortal hankering after Johnny Bull's cast-off clothes. Whenever John throws off an old coat, or a worn-out pair of breeches, nothing will do but Jonathan must put them on, and strut about from Boston to Georgia, to show off his second-hand finery. So with my lady, Mrs. Jonathan, who copies Mrs. Bull in all her fashionable equipments. This imitative habit is the strongest proof of a want of original genius that can be, and produces the most ridiculous inconsistencies, both in dress and in much more important matters. Ever since it was unaccountably found out there was such a wonderful resemblance between the constitution of an English hereditary monarchy, and an American democratic elective republic, our political doctors draw all their nostrums from the practice of British schools; without considering whether the stimulating prescription that will serve to revivify for awhile an old worn-out system, may not very likely prove highly injurious to a healthy and youthful constitution. It would be well for these statesmen, I think, to dip a little now and then into a certain "Inquiry" of John Taylor, of

Caroline, and consider whether that system, the complete triumph of which has impoverished a people, and made millions of beggars, is founded upon a basis of wisdom so immutable as they would lead us to believe.

It is an easy matter for a congressional orator to quote Pitt, or Burke, in support of his argument;—this requires nothing but a good memory. But it would be much better, though not quite so easy, to look this country in the face, study her aspect, her wants, her peculiar advantages and disadvantages, and then to form his political system on these; and not, as is the fashion of the times, on inapplicable precedents, and examples not possessing a single feature of analogy. Edmund Burke exhibited inconsistencies in his political opinions, that, if they do not impeach his virtue, at least call in question his wisdom; for a virtuous man seldom—a wise one never—flies to opposite extremes. In the meridian of his manlier intellect, when he produced the masterpieces of his genius, he was a friend to the rights of the people, and an opponent to the prerogatives of the king. But in his old age, when grown timid, avaricious, and poor withal, he changed his opinions, and fancied he had become wise, when he had only become unfeeling. Men often grow wise in this way, by losing all the noble and disinterested feelings of youth, rather than by gaining any accession of wisdom. With some people, wisdom is only selfishness.

This dunce-like attachment to old standing rules, which time, or change of circumstance or situation

have rendered inapplicable, extends even to inquiries respecting matters in which a man's own individual feelings alone are concerned, and which the tribunal of his own breast ought alone to decide. Even here brother Jonathan must needs resort to English authority, and inquire what Edmund Burke did or said on the occasion, rather than consult his own feelings as to what is becoming in him to do. Nay, if Johnny Bull becomes religious, brother Jonathan must become so too; if one sends missionaries to the Brahmins, the other must go about begging for the same purpose; if one affects to encourage the fine arts, the other must have his academies;—and if the one institutes societies for remedying in some degree those tremendous inequalities of wealth, and extremes of poverty, brought about by the abuses of an old system, the other must say “ditto to Mr. Burke,” and follow the fashion, though no such inequalities exist here to make it necessary; and if it is the fashion abroad to make dumb men mighty philosophers, be sure it will take in this country. Those who laugh in their sleeves are content to be silent, knowing that absurdities which, if let alone, would soon die a natural death, often become eternal by opposition.

But what renders all this mighty ridiculous is, that it is but second-hand finery, which we only get when they are sick of it abroad. There was a German shoemaker Jew, who turned Christian, it is said, and preached in London, to the great delight of the old ladies, and the old gentlemen in petticoats. They grew tired of his stupidity and ignorance at last

and now I perceive he has come to this country to try how his old coat will fit brother Jonathan. In no instance, however, is this propensity to imitation carried to such ridiculous extremes, as in the manner of dressing practised by Mrs. Jonathan, who has a most vehement desire to figure with Mrs. Bull, and the rest. Independently of the great difference in climate between our northern parts, and England or France, it is generally about three or four months after their invention abroad that Mrs. Jonathan gets the fashions. It generally happens, therefore, that the modes invented and adapted for summer there, become the dress of our ladies for autumn or winter; and so with respect to the other seasons. No wonder our dear little girls so often cover their friends with suits of mourning, and break the hearts of their lovers, by dying of consumptions. On some future occasion, I may perhaps trace the effects of this propensity for John Bull's old clothes, on our literature, where it is most important of all, because it strikes at the root of every thing we do, and say, and think, and feel. At present I have merely trifled on the subject; but I have said enough to tire myself, and to raise a hornet's nest about my ears, if it were known that I don't believe in all sorts of societies; nor in dumb philosophers; nor converted journeymen Jew shoemakers; nor, least of all, in the hopeful idea that some half a dozen ignorant missionaries, who never performed a miracle at home, are able, without a miracle, to convert men from the religion of Brahma, fortified, as it is, beyond any other

system ever devised, and become more sacred in the eyes of its professors, by a duration of which none can tell the beginning.

But I am getting a bad habit of digressing in such a desperate manner, that sometimes I have hard work to find what I ought to be talking about. It seems with me as it fared with Achilles, of whom it was foretold, that if he ever left his native home, he would never return. So, if I lose my subject, I seem fated never to find it again, as the poor man in the Rambler, who strayed about in search of flowers, till he could neither find the place of his destination, nor that of his departure. But I am not without some excuse; for owing to the various causes I have touched on heretofore, a traveller could not possibly get along if he told of nothing but what actually occurred to him, and of nothing but what he actually saw or heard.

In reading the relations of old travellers, I am tempted almost to believe, that every thing in this country has been, for two centuries at least, growing downwards, like unto a cow's tail. The Baron la Hontan, who wrote in 1683, says, the Fall of Niagara was then between seven and eight hundred feet high. "Oh, what a fall was there, my countrymen!" Nothing ever equalled it, except Adam's fall, the greatest I ever heard of. Father Charlevoix charges the baron with being a baron of the order of Munchausen; but the good father himself, who wrote in 1720, in order to shine, I suppose, by contrast, tells several matters of fact that require great faith in the

reader to credit. For my part, I don't believe one of these, except the story of the eagle, who, now-a-days, I suppose, economizes his wood, on account of its growing scarce. He talks of rattlesnakes thicker than a man's thigh; of eagles' nests from which they got a full cart load of wood; of owls who cunningly broke the toes of mice, to prevent the little rogues from running away, and then fattened them in hollow trees for their winter's food; of elks curing themselves of the epilepsy by scratching the left ear with the right hoof until it bled; and of other matters utterly *unswallowable*, as Doctor Johnson does *not* say. It was worth while to travel in those days, when a man had the country all to himself as it were. But now, the learned people will not believe any thing but their own theories; and the unlearned believe nothing but what is probable. As to yourself, I can hardly tell where to class you; for while you scout the idea of cats' sneezing being ominous of a storm, you believe in the Huttonian theory; and while you deny that crabs grow fat at the full of the moon, you put full faith in the story of a shower of crabs which it is said once fell, out in the West Indies.

The little town of Lexington, somewhere about which I believe I left myself in my last letter, is charmingly situated in the midst of a rich country, gently undulating like the waves of the ocean. Around it are many fine farms, and pleasant country houses, conveying an idea of that delightful repose, that quiet independence, which is so peculiarly the lot of him who cultivates the soil; and which, who-

ever knows when he is well off, will never be tempted to resign by the allurements of sudden wealth, or commercial glitter.

*O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona norint*—I forget the rest—says honest farmer Virgil, who, if he knew any thing about farming, was an exception to all the poets I ever knew, either personally or by report. This was all I could see of the country, just in the environs of Lexington; for it was raining, as I mentioned, when we arrived, and foggy when we departed. But I saw enough to convince me the landscape was beautiful. I saw in the town a handsome courthouse and church, both of brick; a proof there is both law and gospel in Virginia, though aunt Kate don't believe a word of it. Farewell.

## LETTER XXVIII.

DEAR FRANK,

AT S—— I received your letter, giving all the city news. It grieves me to hear of the increasing abominations prevailing in that goodly metropolis, which seems destined to be for ever the sport of fashionable caprices, and rantipole eccentricities. I am consoled, however, for a great many things, by the exemplary conduct of the ladies, who, I understand, are grown so *economical*, that they save nearly half the expense of clothing, by paring off the superfluities above and below. This is setting a noble example, and I wonder the economical orators in congress have not made honourable mention of it before now. But I suppose they will next session ; for last winter, at Washington, I observed one of them taking particular notice of a lady not above half naked. The account you gave of aunt Kate diverted me out of all measure. You tell me, that not content with being already a member of six-and-forty charitable societies, she has lately got up one for the relief of the poor orphans, whose mothers have burned themselves on the funeral pile of their deceased husbands in the East Indies ! If things go on at this rate, honest industry will ere long become a mere slave to the self-created necessities of the idle, and every

beggar will have as many retainers to support his state and supply his wants, as a feudal baron. What business have men to be beggars in this plenteous land, where industry is ever the forerunner of independence, and poverty is so much the mere consequence of laziness and vice? I have heard of a fellow, who found his quarters in the state-prison so comfortable, that the very day after he was let out, he stole a turkey in the open day, on purpose to get back to the enjoyment of *otium cum dignitate*. I fear it is much the same with those who are only idle, and who become so much attached to a life supported at the expense of other people's labour, that they will never be brought to submit, except through sheer necessity, to the drudgery of working again. That this is the operation of indiscriminate charity, appears in the enormous increase of charitable societies, which are totally unnecessary, unless the number of poor is increased in proportion. What other reason is there for this accession of beggary, except the new facilities of living at the expense of industry? Is the country impoverished? Is the country overpeopled? Are the avenues of labour choked up, or are the means of obtaining an honest livelihood diminished, that we thus see one city alone taxed one hundred and fifty thousand dollars a year, to support its poor, and twice that sum distributed through various other channels, for the same purpose? If these things go on, our cities will become saddled, in time, with a most precious inheritance of pauperism; for as the news of these promised lands spreads abroad, the

whole country will be depopulated of beggary and idleness, that will come from far and near, allured by the prospect of living pleasantly at the expense of other people. But enough of this beggarly subject.

In return for the interesting information conveyed in your letter, you ask me more questions than I can answer in six months. One of these has diverted me so much, that in pure gratitude for the amusement it afforded, I will take it in hand forthwith. I am sure aunt Kate put it into your wise head. You ask me seriously if there are any churches in this part of the world; and whether people ever go to church here, except when they are carried to be buried? I did not mention to you my stopping the Sunday before last at a rambling village, where I was smitten with the sight of a little church, for the purpose of attending the service. I generally keep these things to myself, for I think that a man who talks always about his religion is pretty much on a par with one who does the same of his honesty. I would n't trust either quite as far as I could see him. But I will now answer your question by telling you all about it.

You must know, that after riding about a dozen miles before breakfast one Sunday morning, we came to a village, at the end of which there was a little neat stone church, almost buried in a wood of lofty oaks, under which there was a green lawn without any underwood. It reminded me of an old-familiar scene of early days, and also of a great duty; and after breakfast we went with our good landlady to church. The pew was close by an open window,

out of which you could see through the opening trees a little clear river. Farther on a broad expanse of green meadow—beyond that a far-fading mountain—and above it a bright blue sky. What a path for a man's thoughts to ascend to Heaven! Nothing was heard but the chirping of birds, peeping sometimes into the window; or the cautious footsteps of the villagers, creeping up the aisle, until the service commenced.

The hymn was sung first, and began with, "There is a land of pure delight," &c. and was chanted with that plaintive simplicity we sometimes notice in the ballad of a country lad, of a summer's evening. The appearance of the preacher was as simple as his discourse; and there was nothing to mark any peculiarity, except a Scottish accent that announced his parentage. There was no need of his proclaiming the beneficence, or power of the Divinity, for the balmy air, the glowing sunshine, the rich and plenteous fields, that lay spread around as far as the eye could reach, told of the one; while the lofty mountains, visible in every direction, proclaimed the other. He left the attributes of the Deity to be read in his glorious works, and with simple pathos, called on his hearers to show their gratitude for his dispensations, by the decency, usefulness, and peacefulness of their lives. His precepts denounced no innocent recreation, and I was told his example encouraged no vice or irregularity—not even the besetting sin of his profession, pride and arrogance. He ended his discourse without any theatrical flourish of trumpets;

and I believe without creating in his hearers any other feeling than that of a gentle quiet sentiment of devotion, not so high toned, but more lasting and salutary than mere enthusiasm. Another hymn was sung, and the audience came out of church, but waited on either side of the path outside the door, to shake hands and say how-d' ye-do, as is the good old country custom.

There was nothing certainly in all this, but what may be seen in almost any church, and yet it made an impression on me that is still pleasing and touching in the remembrance. I don't know how it is, but there is something in the repose of the country, and particularly in the silence and shade of deep groves, that is allied to religious emotions by some inscrutable tie. Perhaps it is because almost every object we see in the country is the work of Deity, and every object common to cities the work of man. Though we do not make the comparison consciously, yet the result is the same; or perhaps much more forcible, because the impression is that of feeling, rather than of reasoning.

If I doubted the divinity of the Christian faith, which I do not, seeing as I do the influence of its pure morality, its humane, and benignant, and softening precepts, I would never whisper of doubt. Independently of the sad effects that would result from weakening the foundation of this system of morals, in the minds of those who have not capacity to perceive its importance to the happiness of society, and therefore follow it from a conviction of its divine

origin, the attempt would deservedly end in disgrace and discomfiture. None but a vain and foolish man would, therefore, undertake the task of weakening the force of any of those beneficial opinions, which, if not founded in truth, are at least necessary to the well-being of society. The ignorant will oppose him from the influence of an old-established habit of thinking, and the wise from a conviction of the salutary effect of such impressions.

Nothing can more completely show the importance of religion, not only to the morals, but the manners of the great mass of mankind, than the contrast afforded by a village where there is regular service every Sabbath-day, and one where there is none. In the former you see a different style of manners entirely. Instead of lounging at a tavern, dirty and unshaven, the men are seen decently dressed and shaved, for the purpose of going to church; and the women exhibiting an air of neatness quite attractive. Whether they go to church to pray, or pass their time, to see their neighbours and be seen, or to show off their Sunday clothes, it keeps them from misusing the Sabbath, and polluting the periods of rest and relaxation, by practices either injurious to themselves or disgraceful to society. Whoever has become acquainted with the nature of man, first by his own experience, and next by an observation of others, must be fully convinced of the importance of giving him amusements that are not vicious, and modes of relaxation that are innocent. "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy"—so does it make him a dull

and stupid man. Men, in truth, cannot always be employed; and those who are unable to supply the tedium of bodily inertness, by the exercise of the mind, will—I say *will*, amuse themselves in some way or other. If you afford them the means of attending church on the Sabbath—the most dangerous day of the week, because a day of idleness—whatever be their motives for going there, both their morals and their manners will be softened, by having some object for decency in dress and behaviour; and something salutary to attract them in the dangerous interregnum of a day of leisure.

Having answered your first inquiry, I shall take up the others when it suits my convenience, or when I have nothing else to write about. Good by.

## LETTER XXIX.

DEAR FRANK,

YESTERDAY we laid by at the little town of W——. It was court time, and two lawyers, the pick of the whole country round, were to take the field against each other, in a suit between a wagoner and a batteauxman, in a case of assault and battery. You are to understand, the beautiful river Shenandoah passes not far from this town, and is navigable for batteaux; while at no great distance runs the great western road, which is travelled by the west country wagoners—some of whom, you know, are “half horse, half alligator;” others “part earthquake, and a little of the steam-boat;” and others compounded, according to their own accounts, of ingredients altogether different from the common constituent parts of the rest of mankind. The batteauxmen are, for the most part, composed of materials equally combustible; and the consequence is, that occasionally, when they meet, they strike fire, and blow up the powder-magazine each carries about him in the form of a heart.

The history of the present contest, as detailed by the counsel for the plaintiff, is as follows:—One summer evening, when the mild air, the purple light, the green earth, and the blue sky, all seemed to invite to peace and repose, the batteauxman fastened his boat to the stump of a tree, lighted his fire to broil his

bacon, and began to sing that famous song of "The 'possum up the gum-tree." By-and-by a west country wagoner chanced to come jingling his bells that way, and stopping his wagon, unhooked his horses, carried them round to the little trough at the back of his vehicle, gave them some *shorts*, sat himself down at the top of the bank, below which the batteauxman was sitting in his boat, and began to whistle "The batteauxman robb'd the old woman's hen-roost." The batteauxman cocked his eye at the wagoner, and the wagoner looking askance down on the batteauxman, took a chew of tobacco with a leer that was particularly irritating. The batteauxman drew out his whiskey-bottle, took a drink, and put the cork in again, at the same time thrusting his tongue into his cheek in a manner not to be borne. The wagoner flapped his hands against his hips, and crowed like a cock; the batteauxman curved his neck, and neighed like a horse. Being, however, men of rather phlegmatic habits, they kept their tempers so far as not to come to blows just then. In a few minutes the wagoner swore "he had the handsomest sweetheart of any man in all Greenbriar." The batteauxman jumped up in a passion, but sat down again, and took a drink. In a few minutes the wagoner swore "he had the finest horse of any man in a hundred miles." The batteauxman bounced up, pulled the waistband of his trowsers, took another drink, and bounced down again. A minute after the wagoner swore "he had a better rifle than any man that ever wore a blue jacket." This was too much—for the batteaux

wore a jacket of that colour, and of course this amounted to a personal insult. Besides, to attack a man's rifle! He could have borne any reflection on his sweetheart, or his horse; but to touch his rifle, was to touch his honour. Off went the blue jacket; the batteauxman scrambled up the bank, and a set-to commenced, that ended in the total discomfiture of the wagoner, with the loss of three of his grinders, and the gain of "divers black and bloody bruises," as honest Lithgow says. The batteauxman waited till the moon rose, when he went whistling down the stream to carry the news of his victory to Old Potomac; and the poor wagoner went "to take the law," as a man says, when the law is about to take him.\*

The honest batteauxman was arrested on his return, for assault and battery on the west country wagoner. It being, you know, the great object of the law to find out which party is in the wrong, the lawyer of each side of course labours to throw the imputation on his adversary's client. It appeared clearly enough that the batteauxman made the first assault, but it also appeared in evidence that crowing like a cock was a direct challenge, according to the understanding of these people; that to undervalue a batteauxman's sweetheart or horse, whether he had any or not, was a mortal insult; and that to insinuate any inferiority in his rifle, was an offence which no one could put up with without dishonour. That such points of honour constituted the chivalry of

\* This story has since been introduced elsewhere, with modifications, and ascribed to a distinguished original of the west; but the above relation may be depended on.

these people ; that no class of mankind is without something of this nature ; that however low a man may be, there are insults he cannot submit to, without being degraded among his equals, who constitute his world ; and that to oblige him, in any situation, to put up with disgrace, was to debase his nature, and to destroy every manly principle within him. Trifling as this case may appear, it called forth a display of talent, and a depth of investigation as to how far it was possible, and if possible, how far it was salutary to attempt to repress the operation of those feelings which spur men in all situations to avoid disgrace at the risk of every thing, that gave me a high idea of the two advocates. They were both young men, new to the bar, yet they spoke with a degree of fluency, as well as self-possession, which is seldom exhibited by our young lawyers of the cities, whose genius is too frequently rebuked by the presence of an audience they can hardly hope to please, disheartened by the supercilious airs of the elder counsel, or overpowered by the deadening sense of inferiority.

I am fully convinced that the shortest, as well as the most certain way for a young man of talents in this profession to attain to eminence, is to go to some newly-settled part of the country, where, in comparative solitude, he can discipline his mind, and cultivate the reasoning faculty without interruption ; where he has neither bad models to imitate, or good ones to discourage his first exertions. To speak in public, in the presence of those we feel to be our in-

tellectual superiors, is a task from which the timidity of genius will ever shrink; and can only be performed by minds hardened by practice, or insensible from natural stupidity. The result of this timidity on one hand, and hardihood on the other, is, that in the great cities genius sinks too frequently into hopeless despondency; while the strong-nerved blockhead, who despises the opinions of his superiors, not because he feels himself above them, but because he don't feel at all, rises, in spite of his destiny, to notice and independence.

The young lawyer, therefore, who would rise into consequence and wealth, before his head grows gray with age, would do well to emigrate to some one of the new states, instead of running to seed in the cities, or supporting a precarious existence by watching the docks, to incite sailors to go to law; diving into stews for assaults and batteries, or haunting the quarter-sessions to get a fee of five dollars from some wretched bridewell bird. There they would take root with the first planting of the community, and grow up with the growth of numbers, wealth, and business. They would soon afford to take an office by themselves, instead of joining stocks, and hunting in couples, as they are forced to do in cities, for want of gallant enterprise to emigrate to the glowing west, where talent and industry are the sure fore-runners of an independent fortune and political consequence. Thus riches and honour beckon him to pursue—for whatever may be thought of these matters upon Change, it has lately occurred to me, in

the course of my experience, that a judge, or a member of congress, is nearly as important a personage as a president of an insurance company, a bank director, or even a rich money broker. To you, who have lately seen ten times the interest excited by the election of the Directors of the United States Bank that there was during the election of a President of the United States, this may appear absurd. And so it would be, if all the rest of this country were like the great cities, where not only they worship the divinity of gold, but adore a spurious counterfeit in rags; where respect is paid to little else, and where the value of money is splendidly demonstrated by its power to elevate the lowest reptile to the rank of man, and to an association with human beings. In such a place, where so large a portion of those with whom you associate, and whose opinions influence your own, are more or less dependent for existence on banks, a bank director may indeed be the depository of incalculable dignity; but where the invincible money-getting demon has not yet worked his way into the human heart, like a worm in a chestnut, men derive their dignity, respect, and consequence, from sources far more pure, noble, and elevated. They must possess talents; and if destitute of principle, must at least affect what they do not feel, and thus pay homage to the shrine which they have deserted. Thus even hypocrisy may become useful by showing how valuable that virtue must be, the mere counterfeit of which is thus cherished and rewarded. Farewell.

## LETTER XXX.

DEAR FRANK,

IN ranging up the valley from Staunton to W——, where I now am, we passed through a fine country of limestone, abounding in gay meadows, and pure springs, and bordered on all sides by mountains. The distance is about one hundred miles, and there are several towns in the way, which, however, do not exhibit any great appearance of growth or prosperity. They are generally the county seats, and depend, in a great degree, on the expenditures of those who are brought there by law business, and the employment given to the tradesmen of different kinds, by a circle of the surrounding country, of which each town forms a sort of centre. As new towns are founded in various places, this circle of course diminishes; and as new roads are made, or obstructions in the rivers removed, the little trade they enjoy is carried very often in another direction. Hence it is that our little towns are so apt to grow up prematurely for awhile, when they are all at once arrested in their growth by neighbouring rivals, or by a change given to the course of business, and often decay with the same rapidity they arose. The truth is, that we have too many towns; and so it will ere long be found, if I am not mistaken. We have too many

traders of various kinds, at least in the Atlantic States, who will ere long be obliged to turn to some other profession, or emigrate to the new states. It appears sufficiently evident to me, in the complaints we begin to hear, of the want of business and of employment among all classes of people in the cities, which is in some degree owing to the general pacification of the world, which has turned millions of soldiers into other directions, and enabled millions of people to supply their own wants, who before depended upon others. The people thus thrown out of employment in the cities and towns must emigrate, as I said before, or resort to new professions, or become paupers, and eat soup at other people's expense. It is a shame to our country, whose peculiar boast it was to be free in so great a degree from pauperism, to see the deplorable increase of this fatal disease, which saps the foundation of freedom, by creating a set of men dependent for their support, not on their own exertions, but the bounty of others; and, consequently, the mere tools of those who keep them from starving. These are the kind of people who make instruments in the hands of the rich for the destruction of freedom. When once men have lost the honest pride which shrinks from receiving charity from any human being, they lose the best support of their nature, and the most powerful motive to exertion. It may sound harsh; but the penalty of begging, as a profession, should ever be,—to be universally despised; in order to render it the very last means to which man will resort for his support.

But to return. I was saying, that we have too many people living in cities, in proportion to our farmers, who, after all, are the backbone of every country, whence originates its solid riches and its solid strength. At a time when every other class of labourers are crying out in the streets of our cities about hard times, and many of them forced to beg work, or starve, we don't hear of the farmer suffering any inconvenience; or if he suffers, you don't hear him complain. If it is urged, that the high price of all his produce is a sufficient reason for his not grumbling, I will answer, that he gives as high a price for what he must buy, as he gets for what he sells, so the balance is even. It is not this. It is because the farmers in every country, except one, where they have fallen victims to the accumulated numbers of commerce and manufactures, and to a system of inordinate expenditure, are the most independent of all men, and most emphatically so in this country. Here we have yet an unpeopled world, a blooming, and almost uninhabited Eden in the west, whose bosom is opened to the industrious and enterprising, and where millions of men may set themselves down without creating a famine, since they will ever be able to derive from the earth more than is sufficient for their support.

Yet still our people cling to the towns and cities, attracted by the hope of sudden wealth, and despising the slow, yet sure, rewards of agriculture, which, without leading a man to inordinate riches, secure him for ever from the chances of sinking into beggary

or want. The race of paupers receives few recruits from them ; for in all my sojournings, I may say with truth, that I never saw the industrious farmer forsaken, "or his seed begging their bread." One great cause of the disproportion of numbers which I have noticed between the agricultural and other classes of the community, is the great system of paper-money, which has struck at the root of regular, persevering industry, whose rewards, though slow, are always sure. For some years back, hardly a tradesman in our cities, and of late in our little towns (each of which, however insignificant, has now its snug little bank) thinks of growing rich by his industry. No ; he must get accommodations at some bank, and plunge into speculations ; nor can you now go into a cobbler's stall without seeing a bank notice, or perhaps two or three, stuck up with an awl at the chimneypiece, to remind the honest gentleman that he owes a great deal more than he can pay. Thus is the axe laid to the very root of national morals, and consequently national prosperity, and the whole American people, farmers excepted, sunk into an abject subjection to banks and their directors.

This thing went on, at first, most swimmingly, while we were the carriers of the world, and while this universal system of borrowing was supported by the facility of employing the immense false capital created by the banking institutions, which has been let loose upon us of late years without limit. But all at once, the opening for the employment of this borrowed paper closes, leaving the borrower in debt

over head and ears. Then the reaction of the system begins. The banks are called upon to resume the payment of specie, which they can't do without curtailing discounts—which they cannot do without ruining several honest people, who have made a great figure without ever having been worth a groat—which cannot be done without throwing out of employment many labourers and mechanics whom these honest gentlemen paid with the money they borrowed from the banks. This is precisely the case that will probably soon occur,—when the farce of specie payments commences, and which will come probably to the following pleasant denouement: The banks will commence the payment of specie with great pomp, and perhaps some of them may muster a hundred dollars to jingle on the counter; but having the merchants completely under their thumbs by means of their power of granting or refusing those accommodations, without which no merchant now thinks of carrying on business, they will give the poor dependants to understand, that if they ever dare to ask for a dollar of specie from the bank, their discounts shall cease. Thus will the circulation of specie be effectually checked in the outset; the race of little twopenny rags perpetuated; and the great truth again be demonstrated, that no instance has occurred where a bank that had once stopped payment ever resumed it again, except in the way it will probably be done here—by offering to pay specie, but at the same time annexing a penalty to the demand; which nine out of ten will not dare to incur. Farewell.

## LETTER XXXI.

DEAR FRANK,

I HAVE often regretted that our young men, whose fortune it is to have leisure, means, and opportunity, instead of gadding into foreign countries, did not sometimes take it into their heads to visit their own. All that is worth knowing of Europe, may be learned from books; and it too generally happens that a visit to the celebrated scenes of antiquity, answers no other purpose than to diminish our enthusiasm, by substituting the impression of a dull insignificant reality, in the place of a glowing picture of the imagination. I do not find that these pilgrims to the shrine of the classics, return with more vivid impressions of ancient genius or magnificence; on the contrary, the only ideas they in general seem to have retained, are those of beggars infesting their way; mule-drivers attempting every species of extortion; inns abounding in inconveniences and fleas; and inn-keepers practising every art of imposition. In short, the labours and privations of the journey seem to have obliterated every agreeable or sublime impression from their recollection. Yet it must be confessed they have one advantage. They can contradict both history and tradition, as well as palm upon their hearers the most stupid absurdities, since there is no

resisting the testimony of a man who has been on the spot, and seen with his own eyes, even though he should run counter to the best authorities, and relate impossibilities. A visit to Italy, besides, makes a man of course a connoisseur in all the fine arts, and enables him to abuse every thing in this country with great effect. It is like a degree at college, which makes a man a scholar in spite of his teeth, and confers upon the fortune-travelled youth, pretty much the same distinction that is obtained by the pious mussulman who visits the shrine of Mecca, and stultifies himself with opium by the way.

I dare say you remember H——, the son of the honest old mouser in —— street, who, after living in dust and cobwebs forty years, came out at last a fine gentleman, by the aid of money, meanness, and ostentation. Nothing would serve him, but his son Bobby must go abroad and get a polish, for it was past the art of this country to do it; and so far the old man was right. But in order to join pleasure and profit, (two ideas the old man could never separate in the whole course of his life,) he got him made supercargo to a ship, and away he went. Bobby had never been ten miles from the city, and knew no more of the country than a bank director. He knew, however, I will do him the justice to say, the names of several inland towns, for he had seen them tacked to the names of some of the debtors in his father's ledger, which, with the exception of the old man's bank-book, was the only book he had looked into since he left school. But Bobby had excellent

recommendations from several warm men on Change, and his father had given a grand dinner to one or two foreign ministers, who, of course, could not refuse him letters. Away went Bobby to Bordeaux, sold his cargo, pocketed the money, and hied him to Paris.

The first thing he did was to Frenchify himself with a little short-skirted coat, with buttons nearly as far apart as the pillars of Hercules. His letters procured him admission into the politest circles, which, to the credit of Paris, are always literary; and he had learned French by the newly-invented patent method, in twenty lessons. It is to be observed, that among the learned on the continent of Europe, there is no country in the world which excites so much curiosity and interest as ours. To the mutual credit of freedom and philosophy, nearly all the distinguished philosophers of the age are friends to rational liberty; and now looking anxiously towards the United States, to witness the success of a great experiment, which is to decide, probably for ever, whether their theories of the capacity of mankind to govern themselves, are well or ill founded. It is here they feel that the question is to be decided, and not only their more enlarged benevolence, but their self-love, is nearly concerned in the result, which is to decide whether they are mere visionary speculators; or grave and judicious teachers. They are consequently very inquisitive, with regard to the situation of the United States, as a body politic. The scientific men, on the other-hand, having exhausted all the novelties of the old, look to the new world for

facts to uphold, or overthrow, their own or other theories ; and the polite will select a traveller's own country as the subject of inquiry, because it is one with which he is supposed to be best acquainted.

Bobby was of course questioned on these matters. Sometimes he could not answer ; at others it was still worse, for he answered like a blockhead. The savans took snuff at him ; and the ladies pronounced him *ame de boue*, which was as far as their politeness would permit them to go. Bobby was *cut*, as the saying is ; for among the learned, the witty, and the wise, a man who brings nothing with him, is very likely to take nothing away, unless he is a good laugh, and an intelligent listener ; that is to say, listens as if he understood. But a man with the proceeds of a cargo in his purse, need not be without society, and can find friends even in Paris. Bobby found a plenty who demonstrated their regard by liberally shaving his purse, letting him pay their bills, and calling him "a d—d fine fellow." To make an end, Bobby came home, in about two years, and old H—— was obliged to post the proceeds of the cargo to profit and loss. This so affected the old man, that he broke up his gentility, and went through a retrograde transmigration, by changing from butterfly to grub-worm, after having changed from grub-worm to butterfly. Nevertheless, Bobby became a person of great distinction in the beau monde, and has ever since decided on the affairs of France, with as little opposition as the allied powers do at this time.

So long as this distinction is attained to in society,

merely from the circumstance of having been a year or two abroad, it is to be feared that our young men will continue as heretofore, better acquainted with every other country than their own; which, of all others, is best worthy of their attention, as of all others it ought to be nearest their hearts. The inhabitants of the United States, so far as I have had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with them, are that sort of people who, the more they know, the more they like each other; and it is a great pity that those whose talents, station, or fortune, give them an influence in society, would not go amongst each other; receive and bestow those courtesies, that are the sure forerunners of hearty good-will: and get rid of some of those silly and absurd antipathies that were ingrafted on error, or originated in characteristic peculiarities, that no longer exist, if indeed they ever existed at all. I have seldom or ever seen two honest worthy men fall together, even under the most unfavourable impressions of each other, who did not, in a little time, come to a good understanding, and wonder what could have made them enemies. There is something in being *amongst* people, sharing their enjoyments, partaking in all the good things of the world with them, and being happy in their society, that few good people can resist; and those that can, are not the men for my money. For my part, the more I see of my countrymen, the more I like the honest fellows; and this I will say of them, I never was in any place in the United States, where I did not find friends and a welcome.

Independently of the gratification that would result from thus shaking hands, and becoming acquainted with our widely-diffused countrymen, the domestic traveller would see various shades of society he has never seen before, and contemplate civilized man in circumstances and situations in which he cannot be viewed in any other part of the world. I don't mean in our cities, for there is little diversity; I mean along the banks of the Ohio, the Mississippi, and their various tributary streams, where exists a race of men, active, hardy, vigilant, enterprising, and fearless as the Indian, with as much learning, genuine politeness, and various intelligence, as those who inhabit the Athens of America. In all the grand and beautiful features of landscape, in variety of scenery, in every thing that constitutes the divinity of nature, this country is equal, and indeed superior, to most; and in no part of the world, perhaps, can the pure admirer of nature be more easily and variously gratified. Yet hitherto no American, that I know of, has thought it worth his while to traverse it with a view of correcting the erroneous impressions entertained by the inhabitants of the various sections, with respect to each other; exposing the misrepresentations of prejudiced, ignorant, or interested foreign travellers; and giving to his countrymen a picture of themselves, such as would be drawn by a brother, who, in telling their faults, would do justice to their virtues.

Had I leisure, opportunity, and another trifling requisite, I mean talent, I would most assuredly think

of this task. As it is, I can only earnestly wish, that some one, better qualified than myself, would undertake it. If he did it as it ought to be done, he would confer a lasting benefit on his country, and ensure himself a reward, to which all other sublunary ones are nothing—a lasting and blameless fame. Good night.

## LETTER XXXII.

DEAR FRANK,

IN the letter I received from you sometime ago, which, by the way, is the only one I have got, in return for at least fifty of mine, you inquired if it was really the fact that the people of this part of the world were more hospitable than in ours? As I have leisure just now, and have seen nothing worth talking about since I wrote last, I will proceed to answer your question in the affirmative; though, I confess, my *local* feelings suffer in the confession.

The mania of this truly philosophical age, is that of accounting for every thing we see, hear, or feel, upon philosophical principles; and as I do not wish to be out of fashion, either in dress, or any thing that is not actually bad or preposterous, I would proceed to account, as well as I can, for this spirit of hospitality, which, wherever it exists, confers lustre upon a country. It is one of the finest of national characteristics; and it is in a great measure owing to this, that little Ireland, with all its bulls and oddities, is still a sort of pet nation to all the world, except its stern stepdame, Old England.

The truth seems to be, and it is a sort of libel on civilization, that in proportion as nations attain to a certain degree of what by courtesy is called refine-

ment, they lose their hospitable habits; and the interchange of civilities then becomes, like almost every thing else, a mere matter of barter, among people who give entertainments, that they may receive them in return; the stranger does not partake of these, because he is not in a situation to repay them in kind; unless, indeed, he is of sufficient consequence to make his entertainment a matter of honour to his host. This effect of refinement on society, would lead me naturally to inquire, if I had time or patience, into a very interesting question, whether the acquisition of this refinement, by deadening or repressing the exercise of many liberal and manly virtues, does not in reality injure society, by taking away from the shirt to give to the ruffle? Perhaps I may give you more of this by-and-by; at present, I must get on with the matter more immediately in hand.

It appears to me, that the progress of nations in arts, riches, and refinement, is exactly in an inverse ratio with the more liberal qualities of the heart; and that there is a happy medium, in which the human faculties, as well as the human feelings, are poised in their nicest balance. Thus we find that certain high and heroic qualities are common among people called barbarous, because they do not pay quite so much attention to elegance of decoration, or mere personal comforts, which, if seen at all, are of very rare occurrence among those who arrogate to themselves a superior degree of refinement. Among those is that generous hospitality, which is practised among all nations, except such as excel in the fine

arts, and value themselves upon their breeding ; that is to say, upon a certain whimsical, artificial arrangement of certain empty courtesies, signifying nothing. All the nations of antiquity were hospitable till they became corrupt ; among them the stranger was a sacred character, and to do him violence, or refuse him shelter, was an offence to the gods. The only life, the stern, unfeeling politician Ulysses ever spared, was that of Heliakon, *because he remembered the hospitality of his father*. To this day, we find that there is ten times the hospitality in Asia, which is stigmatized as semi-barbarous, than there is in Europe, where what little we find, is among the poorer and less refined class of people. The Mahometan exclaims, “Allah, forbid ! I should receive money for entertaining the stranger ;” the European gets as much out of him as he can ; or if he is too proud to take his money, turns him from his door. In fact, to sum up all on this head, I do most heartily believe, that what is called a refined state of society, destroys more of the high heroic qualities of human nature, than it can possibly make amends for in any other way ; and that the frivolous distinctions which grow out of such a sterile soil, are utterly at war with the sublimer efforts of genius and virtue.

I have heard it often remarked in our part of the world, with great self-complacency, by portly traders and brokers, who fancied themselves at the pinnacle of refinement, because they had a splendid equipage and fine furniture, “that the middle and eastern states were at least a century before the southern, in re-

finement and civilization." Upon inquiring into the grounds of this notion, I found it uniformly originated in the vulgar practice of confounding mere personal comforts, and little domestic knick-knackery, with the qualities of the mind, or the exercises of the intellectual faculties. Thus, in the eyes of stupidity, the fine coat makes the gentleman, all over the world. Now I am willing to allow, that in our part of the world they have better roads, bridges, taverns, etc., and that their houses are better painted, and their farms in better order, than in the south. I will allow, too, that all these are good things, and that people are right enough in having them; but I cannot accept of these as the criterion of either refinement of manners, or elevation of intellect. On the contrary, experience verifies the fact, that the most lofty intellect, and the greatest heroism, is generally connected with an indifference to these little vulgar niceties and snug comforts. I have been among a certain class of people, whose farms were perfect gardens; whose houses were complete in every respect, and withal well painted; and whose cattle were better lodged than many white men in other places. Yet they were the most stupid of the human race; destitute of almost every quality that gives dignity to our nature, and void of every intellectual gift, except the instinct of making and saving money. Shall we say that these have made greater progress in refinement and civilization, than people whose cattle are not quite so well lodged?

The day before yesterday, we stopped at the

house of a sturdy four-square German, who, we were told, entertained travellers, as is the custom in this part of the world. Every thing about him bore the appearance of comfort and competency. His house was large, his fences in prime order, his cattle looked like mammoths in the fields; his green meadows extended all around his mansion, here and there exhibiting a little village of haystacks; his barn was of stone, as big as an ancient baronial castle; and in his mouth he carried a pipe, three feet long, an indubitable sign of his being well to do in the world. I found the old man grumbling in a sort of subterranean tone, about the taxes he was obliged to pay to the government, which he considered enormous. As I had all along been led to believe, that the taxes in this country were mere nothing, I was somewhat surprised at this, and asked him the amount he paid. "Fifteen dollars and thirty-seven and a half cents." How much land have you? "Twelve hundred acres." Does that fine grist-mill belong to you? "Yes." Are all the cattle I see, your's? "Yes." How much wheat did you raise this year? "A little rising of five thousand bushels." Do you pay any tax on your mill? "No." On your cattle? "No." On your wheat? "No." Go to the d—l, thought I, for a grub-worm grumbler as thou art; but I was too polite to tell him so. While breakfast was getting ready by his two daughters, who were employed in this duty, while a younger one was tending a carding-machine in a little shed near the house, we talked a little politics, as usual; a subject about which every

man in this country, that knows any thing at all, knows something. I found him as stupid as an owl, with no other idea of liberty, than what was connected with the most sordid contemptible feeling. He would not have cared if the social system had gone to wreck, so he could have saved a penny in taxes. In settling for our breakfast, this comfortable dog palmed upon us a bank-note of some distant rag-manufactory, which, after attempting to pass several times, I threw into the fire, out of pure revenge against the bank from which it issued !

It so happened that the very same night we slept at a house of a very different description, belonging to a man who, according to the phrase in our parts, was at least a century behind the man at whose house we breakfasted. He was what is usually called a tall slab-sided Virginian, with bright blue eyes, high cheek-bones, with not enough fat about him to hold his ideas by the legs and wings, as Peter Pindar says. He received us with a sort of nonchalance which would have affronted a John Bull hugely, and which, to say the truth, was not very inviting. However, after we had talked to him a little while about his farm, and patted the heads of half a dozen little chubby rogues that were running about, he grew very pleasant, and entered into a conversation, in which he displayed a liberality of feeling, and of intelligence, that would have astonished people who connect *comfort*, as it is called, with much higher matters. I asked him about his taxes ; he merely smiled, and said they were so trifling he hardly

knew what they were. While we were chatting, a Kentucky pedestrian with a knapsack, came up, on his way home. He inquired for lodgings with the manly confidence of a freeman, and was received by our host in the same manner, precisely, that he received us. Nay, with rather more courtesy, for I have always observed that the better sort of minds unconsciously bristle up a little, at the approach of those who, *perhaps*, may claim a superiority, which they are not apt to acknowledge by any exhibition of deference. I must confess, however, that this man would have sunk very much in the balance by which refinement is sometimes estimated; for his house was neither painted, or in fact finished; and I actually detected three old petticoats stuffed in the upper windows. Then his barn was built of logs, with huge wide cracks between them; his fences were a little out of repair; and I plead guilty to the fact, of his cattle having little more fat on their ribs than their master. His house, too, was marvellously deficient in fine furniture, and we ate of one of the most plentiful meals I ever saw, from an oak table. When he found we did not take airs upon ourselves, he treated us with a sort of careless, manly freedom, at which, once or twice, I felt myself inclined to be a little offended, but which I have since reflected on with pleasure, as an indication of a mind, which even in a situation which, perhaps, more than any other, engenders and fosters a habit of cringing servility to superiors, and low-bred insolence to inferiors, had retained its primitive independence. In the morning

he was particular in giving us directions for our journey, and did not palm upon us a single uncurrent note, though I observed he had several, which had probably been palmed upon him by travellers, wittingly or unwittingly.

Now, Frank, get out of your city trammels, and tell me honestly, which of these two you think had made the greatest advances in refinement and civilization, and which stood highest in the scale of being? I know you will agree with me, in spite of the money-brokers, that the man with the petticoats stuck in his windows was worth an army of the others; and would become their master, if it ever came to a struggle of intellect, or a contest of spirit. The truth is, that people who are very particular about snugness, and personal comfort, and insignificant conveniences, or trifling decorations, that add little to real enjoyment, are generally very selfish in their feelings, and stinted in their intellects.

In travelling through Virginia, and the south, I soon found that if I met in the country an exceeding neat, well-painted, snug new wooden house, with every thing comfortable about it, I had better not stop there; it was no place for the traveller and stranger. No—I sought me out an old rusty mansion, uncontaminated by paint for many a year, whose owner had never been bitten by the money-making mania, and who had rather strangers would share the comforts of the interior, than admire the outside of his house. If I saw a broken pane stuffed with a petticoat, then I was sure of a welcome. It was like

the banner of the ancient barons, which, when displayed from the castle, betokened that the lord was at home, and would receive all that came. At these "gude houses" one is always sure of a welcome, unaffected and unostentatious; not the effect of a sudden fit of generosity, or accorded for the purpose of displaying to the eyes of a stranger the splendours of the house; but given without effort, as if it were not worth giving, and thus relieving the receiver from the weight of obligation. I have been at some of these places, and I hope in Heaven I shall visit many more, for of all the characters I covet for my country, that of hospitality is what I cherish most; not for the purpose of attaining to a name abroad, by entertaining men who have returned our hospitality with slanderous imputations, but as a noble disinterested interchange of kindness, and as a tie binding our people together, and giving them as it were a home in every corner of this great republic, they may chance to visit. For my part, not even the most substantial benefits warm my heart half so much as the recollection of the kind welcomes, it has sometimes fallen to my lot to receive at a distance from home, and among strangers.

This liberal hospitality, to whatever cause it may be owing, is more general in this part of the world, than where we have been educated; and is owing to the people being "a century behindhand with us," in the sense I have just explained. They are not yet so debauched with the sordid money-making spirit, which, when it once takes root in the heart of

man, is the *Bohon Upas*, that poisons the air we breathe, and kills every wholesome product of vegetation in its neighbourhood, creating a desert around. The time, however, seems to be fast approaching, when the *saving spirit* will pervade even the soil of Virginia, and the south; for there are actually instances of men selling their lands to become merchants and manufacturers, smitten by the imposing appearance of wealth and competency, exhibited by the dependants of banks. If this practice should continue, and increase, in a few years the race of old land-holders will be no more; their places will be occupied by spruce traders, who value money beyond all things, because it gives them a consequence nothing else can give, and who will sometimes sport a grand dinner to show their silver plate. The ancient spirit of hospitality will then be extinct where it once flourished, and those who seek it must go beyond the mountains to the new states, where it will finally take refuge. Money will then be not only virtue, but wisdom; and the true satiric allusion of the ancient statue, called *Hermathena*, which has puzzled the learned, be understood. This statue, you may recollect, represented Mercury, the god of thieves, lawyers, and merchants, and Minerva in the same body; alluding to the custom on Change, of making wealth and trickery synonymous with wisdom.

It often amuses me to see how a hap-hazard, neck-or-nothing voyage, which by some rare good fortune enriches a common-place individual, increases his reputation for talents. All the small-fry look up to

him ; he begins to talk with great emphasis, but no discretion about matters he don't understand ; and his great talents are at last rewarded by being incorporated into a banking institution ! It would seem, that the acquisition of riches is considered as unequivocal proof of great *cleverness*—which is the mercantile phrase for wisdom. But in my opinion, any man may grow rich if he pleases. It is only to become a slave to gain ; to think, and work, and dream for money, and to repress and starve every liberal impulse of the mind. Thirty or forty years sticking close to this, will inevitably make a man rich enough to consult his tastes or his passions, just at an age when he has no tastes, and for the most part but one passion. This is what is called gaining the whole world and losing our soul—an exchange very common in this world. Good by.

## LETTER XXXIII.

DEAR FRANK,

AT L—— I received your letter, written almost a month ago, which I must answer forthwith. In the first place, you accuse me of hostility to English people, English literature, and every thing else English, because I speak, I hope, with a becoming feeling, of the false, malicious views of this country, given by so many British writers and travellers. I disclaim the imputation of any other than *defensive* hostility, at the same time that I am neither ashamed of my feelings on the subject, nor afraid to express them. In all my former writings, such as they were, I have appealed exclusively to my own countrymen, and sought to take root, if I took root at all, in their affections. I have never asked myself what the critics of England, or any other foreign nation, would say of me, if they said any thing at all; nor lost sight of my nativity, for the sake of gaining, from abroad, a little grudging approbation. At the same time, I well knew the consequences of this course. I knew the docility of that portion of my countrymen which gives the tone in matters of taste and literature; their inveterate habit of taking their opinions, in all such matters, from the other side of the Atlantic, and that while boasting of their independence, they were

but the creatures of the Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews.

I was well aware, therefore, of the sacrifice I made in omitting to conciliate these formidable tribunals, and that the consequence of my audacity, in attempting the vindication of my dear country, would be either supercilious contempt or scurrilous criticism. I pleased myself with the idea that, though the readers of Reviews, and the fashionable circles here, which but echo the opinions of the fashionable circles abroad, might condemn my course; yet, the great mass of the better sort, who loved their native land, and thought for themselves, would eventually uphold me in the course I had marked out for myself. This remains yet to be decided; and whatever the decision may be, I shall continue right on, straight forward, in the conviction that the time will one day come, when we shall not only be independent in our conduct, but in our opinions, and when the posterity of those, who did not fear to meet these proud Britons face to face in the strife of blood, will muster the courage to think and speak for themselves, at least in matters that exclusively concern them.

At present, the two great critical tribunals, which divide and contest the empire of this western world, are the Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews, both regularly republished here, one would suppose, to initiate us into the theory of despising ourselves, our institutions, and our country. I can tell what the opinions of a man are, from his devotion to one or other of these oracles, as I can a man's religion from

the church he goes to. They are both, in the main, able and learned productions, and might safely be trusted in matters of literature and taste, were they not the oracles of two political parties, diametrically opposed to each other. The Edinburgh is not quite half republican, and not quite half orthodox. The Quarterly, on the other hand, is as much of a high churchman as Archbishop Laud, and as much of a monarchist as old Filmer, who maintains that "the desire of liberty caused the fall of Adam." One is great in metaphysics, the other in classical learning; one is a freethinker, the other a bigot; one a Foxite, the other a Pittite; and there is nothing they agree in, except always differing in their estimate of the books they review, and speaking slightly of that honest gentleman, brother Jonathan. In this latter accomplishment, it must be confessed that Mr. Gifford far excels the Scottish Aristarchus, which I ascribe to his early habits, and the unlucky circumstance of having been once soundly beaten, while cabin-boy on board a Newcastle collier, by a Yankee sailor at Wapping. On such slight incidents do the destinies of nations turn! who would have thought, Frank, that this unfortunate rencontre would have compromised the reputation of our country?

But whatever may be its merits, or its character, I am inclined to demur to receiving my impressions and opinions through the medium of a foreign publication. A literary vassalage, of this sort, is too much akin to a political one, to suit my notion of independence. There are, undoubtedly, certain great

fundamental, universal truths, in which all mankind pretty much agree; but there are other matters in which they as generally differ, such as habits, manners, political institutions, and various every-day things. These naturally grow out of the peculiar situation of a country; they harmonize with each other, because they originate, as it were, in the soil, and accommodate themselves to the tastes, as well as the exigencies of those who adopt them. It betokens the last degree of base subserviency in a people, to suffer themselves to be bullied or ridiculed out of these, by persons living three thousand miles off, on the other side of a great ocean, and who know no more of what is proper to our situation and circumstances, than the man in the moon, or him in front of the almanac. A nation that accommodates itself to such authorities, cannot but grow up a mongrel, exhibiting the most absurd contradictions, and instead of wearing the simple plain robe of a manly consistency, will flaunt about in a Joseph's coat of many colours, the ridicule and contempt of those it vainly attempts to imitate.

Many very sensible persons, who I have heard discuss the subject, have held the opinion, that it would be most proper and becoming in the people of this country, to submit quietly and decorously to the flagellations of the transatlantic cities, as well as the misrepresentations of the swarm of British tourists, which has, from time to time, infested our soil. They argued that it was more magnanimous to say nothing, pocket the affront, turn the other cheek for another

slap, and make these people ashamed of themselves by treating them more hospitably than ever, on a second visit. They added, that there was no use in putting in a plea of defence, or throwing the gauntlet of retaliation, because nobody in England reads an American book, (as the Edinburgh Review had demonstrated, while it was at the same time sucking in the philosophy of Franklin, and giving it out as its own) and therefore it was useless to enter the lists, where there was no one to take any notice of our champions.

On the face of them, these reasons appear plausible enough; but if we go a little deeper, I think their fallacy will be sufficiently apparent. In all my experience, I never saw a man or a nation get any thing by submitting to be insulted, except a repetition of insult. Submission is ever ascribed to cowardice, and even the exhibition of a spirited weakness, is more respectable than passive subserviency. Where there is a vast and apparent superiority in strength or dignity, a man or a nation may perhaps afford to be magnanimous, and overlook insult, indignity, or abuse. But among equals, or with inferiors, such a course is always ascribed to cowardice. The Quaker policy won't do among nations, unless all nations turn Quakers. The United States have not yet quite arrived at that elevation that they can look down on the opinions of the world, and magnanimously snap their fingers at calumny and abuse; and least of all do I imagine Jonathan such a fool as to be gulled into good humour by John Bull patting

him on the back, and telling the young dog "he is such a d—d fine fellow he can't, for his soul, help blackguarding him now and then." In short, Frank, I am unalterably of opinion, that a nation, which submits in silence to all sorts of misrepresentation, will, in a little time, have no character left to defend, in the same manner as a nation, which habitually suffers its rights to be violated, will end in having no rights at all.

As to the second point, admit if you will that these contradictions and retaliations are never read abroad. What then? If they are read at home, they serve one good purpose at least, in keeping up the spirits of our own people, by convincing them that their accuser, with all his pretensions, is equally vulnerable with themselves, and thus relieving them from the base feeling of inferiority, the worst curse that can fall on a nation, because it carries with it every degrading characteristic of imitative subserviency, and generates the most submissive meanness. You may argue, if you please, that there is no great danger that we should undervalue ourselves in our own opinions, and I confess there is some truth in the remark. But still, with all their bragging, the people of the United States, with here and there an exception, do not appear to me to possess that self-consciousness which is the only solid basis of national pride. They rail at kings, yet have a sickly appetite, a secret ambition, to be presented at courts, and kiss a royal hand whenever they have an opportunity. They denounce aristocracy, yet in every city, town,

village, or neighbourhood, however insignificant, you see a little knot of purse-proud sinners, aping all its fopperies, assuming all its petty airs, and looking down on those one step below them in the ladder of life, with all the dignified hauteur of a leader in a procession of dirt-carts on their way to glory. In short, we abuse the satellites of tyranny, as we call them, and take every opportunity of imitating them as far as it is in our power. This is not national pride, but national folly, nonsense, and meanness. We assume a superiority, yet acknowledge our inferiority by imitation; and if the English tourists and critics were to content themselves with pointing out this disgraceful foible in our character, instead of stigmatizing our independent farmers and mechanics as rude barbarians, we would laugh with them with all our hearts. This is in fact the weak side with us, yet these blockheads can't see it. Our people want a proper basis for national pride, and its inseparable concomitant, national feeling, and it is only by pointing out and vindicating their *real* claims to superiority, that this basis is to be established. However, time is a great worker of miracles, and twenty years hence you will see a great change.

The English tourists who have written concerning our country, are in general prejudiced, superficial persons, apparently without the will or the ability to take an enlarged and liberal view of our people, our government and institutions. A bad road, a bad dinner, or indifferent lodgings, is quite sufficient to put them out of humour with every thing, and

sprinkle half a dozen of their pages with vinegar. They lose sight of the general diffusion of the comforts of life among the great mass of the people, and their freedom from all the heavy impositions of an expensive, prodigal government, and seem to forget, that where one man is dependant on the facilities of travelling, or the conveniences of a tavern, thousands depend on the comforts of a home for happiness. Instead of making the general diffusion of the rational enjoyments of life, the criterion of national prosperity and individual happiness, they take things in detail; look at but one at a time, and if they find but a speck, or a blot any where, make use of it to mar the whole picture. They fly through the country in stages and steam-boats; make half their tour in the night-time; see nothing but the highways and a few great cities, the inhabitants of which are half foreigners; talk with a dozen foolish would be aristocrats, who give them dinners, and instil into them their own superficial notions, and then return to set themselves up as judges of the institutions, manners, morals, and religion, of a great people dispersed over half a world.

The tone and manner assumed by these idlers, is, to my mind, more offensive than their ignorance and prejudices. I should have no objection to seeing the faults and foibles of our people pointed out in a judicious and friendly manner, especially if they were relieved by a similar exhibition of our virtues. No man of sense would find fault with this. But these gentry show us at once that they come among us to find fault. They begin with a sneer, and end with

a calumny. If they by any chance condescend to mete out to us a little modicum of praise, in order to gain credit for impartiality, it is given with an air of such consummate arrogance, such supercilious superiority, as to make it quite as offensive as their ill-grounded sarcasms. We see from the first, that they not only come among us as spies, but also with a determination to spy out nothing but our faults and foibles. When all is done, and their work is fairly before the world, they strut about with a newly-acquired dignity, and imagine themselves persons of great consequence, because their flippant impertinence, and foolish malignity, have made them the objects of contempt and scorn to a great nation. A little, stinted, and malignant mind, conscious of its incapacity to gain the admiration or good-will of the world, limits its ambition to the exertion of its mean faculties, in making enemies instead of friends. Such minds mistake notoriety for fame, and convert even the scorn of mankind into food for the gratification of vanity.

The influence of English literature is greater in this country than that of any other; in the first place, because we have not yet got over the old colonial feeling of veneration for every thing English; and secondly, because it is naturalized here without the labour and expense of translation. A popular English book, in three or four months after its appearance in that country, is as well known, and as universally read here, as in the place of its birth. This influence might be turned to account in creating a good

understanding between two nations—so much alike that they are very apt to quarrel with each other—and laying the foundation of a lasting friendship. But hitherto, it has, for the most part, been employed in sowing the seeds of ill-will, jealousy, and contention. The pen of England has made as deep wounds, and created as many enemies in this country, as her sword; and whatever may be the feelings of our government, in a political point of view, towards that country, the people of the United States will never cease to look upon it as their determined, inflexible enemy, so long as they witness these effusions of splenetic hostility. It is in vain we are told, that these are the productions of vulgar writers, addressing themselves to the vulgar prejudices of Englishmen. We know better. We know that books of this kind will not be published, unless they find purchasers, and that the vulgar of England do not buy books. We know, too, that the London Quarterly is the organ of the national church, and the national aristocracy of England, and that it is distinguished above all other English publications for its patronage of these veracious and praiseworthy tourists, who go about this country, from time to time, to eat our dinners, drink our wines, turn up their noses at the semi-barbarians, and spy out their enormities. I feel indignant at this, and I do not deny it. I don't profess the non-combatant doctrines, and mean to fire away shot for shot, even though none of mine may ever reach their mark, if it be only to show my good-will. My country is my

mistress; I can see her faults, but I will not stand quiet and hear her run down by strangers. While I feel gratitude for the pleasure and instruction I have derived, and still derive, from the more early productions of English genius and learning; while I look up to the writers of her better days, as the rich fountains from whence my mind derived its earliest nourishment, I neither consider my obligations to extend to a respect for the opinions of pert splenetic hirelings, or to a quiet acquiescence in their privilege to abuse us, though they may be the countrymen of Milton and Shakspeare, Newton and Locke, Beaumont and Fletcher. Though I yield not to Englishmen themselves in my admiration and reverence for these, I see no special reason why all the Grub-street writers of England should receive my homage, and challenge the privilege of reviling us, merely because they happen to be their countrymen.

The second charge I think it necessary to reply to, is that of contempt of the church, or rather the dignitaries of the church, who, you say, I have not treated with sufficient respect. This is a delicate subject, and perhaps might better be let alone; yet still I cannot consent to sit down quietly under the imputation, although, in all probability, my defence may increase the magnitude of the original fault. Notwithstanding all the libels uttered in the pulpit against poor human nature, and the alleged depravity, as well as infidelity of mankind, I cannot but feel and know, that there is a natural religious feeling pervading the whole human race. All nations, savage

or civilized, that I have ever read or heard of, pay worship to a superior being; it seems a universal sentiment indeed; and therefore do I disbelieve that testimony, come whence it may, which goes to establish their propensity to unbelief. There is another charge against honest human nature, in which I put as little faith, and that is the want of respect to the preachers of the gospel, who, wherever I have been, exercise a greater influence in society, and receive a greater degree of attention and respect, than any other class of men of equal talents and virtue. It is salutary that it should be so, to a certain extent, provided it stops short of a servile obedience to every innovation they choose to introduce into the church, and to the relinquishment of those innocent gratifications, noble pursuits, and blameless amusements, which render this world tolerable to its inhabitants, contribute to purify and refine the heart, and tempt us to the exertion of those faculties bestowed upon us by the Being who is all intellect, in the pursuit of honourable distinction. Fully aware of the salutary effects resulting from a respect for religion and its respectable professors, I am not rogue or fool enough to say any thing to the disparagement of either. The observations I made in a former letter, merely related to divers little sprigs of divinity, who, having tried all other professions in vain, have at last taken refuge in the church, where they rail with a sort of senseless impetuosity against what our good old fathers and mothers practised themselves, and permitted to their children, and endeavour to gain a

reputation for their unrelenting piety, which they feel is denied to their talents. I dislike to see such beardless babblers, who are obliged to wear spectacles to look like men, lecturing and hectoring gray-headed patriarchs and aged matrons, as if they were children at school. This might have passed, when priests were the only people that could read and write ; but I can't help thinking it is a little indecorous now-a-days, and am very apt to speak my mind. I contemplate a preacher of the gospel, who exhibits even a remote shadow of the precepts he inculcates ; who is modest, yet dignified and firm in enforcing the doctrines of his religion ; who preaches forgiveness and charity to all men, and refrains from persecuting his brother ; who can bear to be opposed, without insulting his antagonist ; who can endure to see his fellow-creatures enjoying innocent amusements, in which it is not becoming his character to partake, without endeavouring to poison their pleasures by persuading them they are wicked ; when I see him, in short, acting up to the high station he occupies, without arrogance in the pulpit, and servility out of it—I feel that I behold in reality an ambassador of Heaven, and contemplate such a being with a degree of reverential affection, such as I bear to my own father. While I cherish this feeling, however, I certainly do not consider myself as called upon to bow the knees of my understanding to every young gentleman in spectacles and a black coat.

Next in the list of my enormities, is a disrespect for philosophy and science, exemplified in the light

manner I have spoken of the art of making worlds, and various learned as well as fashionable theories of the day. Now, so far from either of these charges being true, there is not a man in your lyceum, young or old, that feels a greater veneration for philosophy and philosophers, science and scientific men, than myself, when they are of the true sort. But I can't, for the life of me, carry this propensity so far as to admire your learned metaphysicians, who, like dancers in a cotillion, set off with a flourish, cut a few capers, and then return to the place from whence they started. Nor, to say the truth, have I much veneration for those laborious idlers, who play at football with worlds, and make them with such perfect ease, that our veneration for the great Author of nature is astonishingly decreased, when we find the facility with which such trifles can be performed. Still less can I give my respect to a race of learned men, common in these days, who are eternally reminding us of their greatness, by publishing in the newspapers all they write, and all that is written to them; who puff each other into notice by an exchange of complimentary letters; who write long dissertations on a dry bone, or comical fish; who "nickname God's creatures," whenever they can catch them without a Latin one; who turn their own trumpeters, for want of a better, and who will travel you two hundred miles to get a piece of bone, for an excuse to advertise the public of their existence, as poor Mr. Lovell, in *Evelina*, paid five shillings a

night to go to the play, and show his friends he was still living. Such men are, I think, fair game; amusing fellows, whose existence was a paradox, they seemed so perfectly useless, until a wag made the discovery that they were made to be laughed at. Were it not for these truly valuable members of society, in the present dearth of merry authors, the world of literature would be as dull as our old professor's lectures, on—every thing that came into his head.

The last and most serious charge you have insinuated against me, is that of cherishing a confirmed antipathy to charitable institutions, and especially to those venerable married ladies, and thrice venerable spinsters, who go about our cities like roaring lions, doing good. Here, too, you mistake me. I only objected to the infinite number of these institutions, which are placed solely under the direction of women, whose easiness of belief, and want of experience of the various disguises under which the vicious practise on the credulity of the charitable, render them incompetent to such a delicate task. I am satisfied that this almost indiscriminate charity causes far more misery than it alleviates; panders to vice and immorality, by taking from the labouring class the strongest inducement to industry and economy, namely, the conviction that these alone would keep them from starving; by rendering it easier to get relief by begging than by work; and finally, by giving a sort of respectability to pauperism and

beggary, which destroys the salutary contempt we used to feel towards those now right-honourable and thriving professions. The moment you make beggary a tolerably respectable calling; the moment you relieve it from the tax which it pays to society, by being despised, that moment you create armies of lazzaroni, and convert the idle and the indolent, whom the sense of shame had hitherto deterred, into sturdy beggars. When I was last in your city, where there is a society for the relief of every thing, I was struck with the bold and confident air which pauperism had assumed, which I suppose partly arose from the unwonted respectability of the dress it had assumed. Formerly it was necessary for a beggar to be both ragged and dirty, and to exhibit the strongest symptoms of inability to work. But during the period of my visit, I was several times accosted by stout, hearty fellows, who, under pretence they could not get work, begged without a blush. The friend with whom I staid, complained to me that there was hardly a day in which he was not called on for charitable contributions, either to relieve somebody, or to convert the Hindoos, or Hottentots, by some of those good ladies I spoke of, who are such sturdy beggars, that there is no refusing them.

I hope by this time you begin to comprehend what I mean; to wit, that the distribution of public charities ought to be in the hands of public officers, acquainted with the world, and able to detect imposture of every kind. It will then be bestowed

with a wariness and circumspection, which, while it operates as far as is possible to the relief of virtuous distress, does not encourage and pamper idleness and debauchery. I can hardly believe these ladies—to whose desire to do good I give every due praise—do really benefit mankind, by taking from the pockets of the worthy, to bestow on the worthless. Farewell.

## LETTER XXXIV.

DEAR FRANK,

THE "Old Ancients," as our friend W——, the bank director, used to call them, pictured the god of riches as lolling in the lap of peace, and glittering in ornaments of gold. The modern Plutus is quite a different sort of personage, who, if he had his dues, and came forth in his appropriate livery, would look very much like a scarecrow in a corn-field, which is generally a man of straw, clothed in rags. This beggarly Plutus, instead of being nursed by peace, like his ancient namesake, is the offspring of war. By the exercise of a rare kind of magic, he converts the debts of an institution into a source of wealth, and is consequently rich in proportion to the number of his creditors, rather than of his debtors. This new system of getting rich under the patronage of the paper Plutus is a great improvement on the ancient one, since it is much easier for a man to get in debt to others than to get others in debt to him.

To illustrate this, I will simply give you the prominent features of the present fashionable banking Plutus, which has set so many splendid paupers on horseback, and caused all those, with few exceptions, who are not connected with the system, to walk on foot. A modern bank spins itself out of its own

bowels, as a spider does the web with which he catches the silly flies that buzz about. I will give you the history of one of these, which is nearly the history of all, and which I learned from an ex-director.

In a certain city, over which there did *not* reign a mighty monarch, but which was governed by an illustrious mayor, and twenty-four fat aldermen, which is a great city on paper, and, like the famous *Terra Incognita*, makes a terrible figure on the map, but is just as difficult to be found elsewhere as the said *Terra Incognita*—in this great city, certain tavernkeepers, stage-owners, and drivers of hackney-coaches, being in want of money, did incontinently gather themselves together, and make a bank. They first elected themselves directors, and after advertising that the capital stock of the bank, to wit, the paper not yet made, was all that they meant to appropriate to the payment of their debts, they fell to work, and made as many bank-notes as the president could possibly sign. With these notes they paid up their instalments, by borrowing of the bank to pay the bank. The plan succeeded so famously, that Messrs. Tom, Dick, Harry, tag, rag, bobtail, and the rest of them, got up banks in the same way, until at last money became so plenty, that it was actually the cheapest thing at market—which was a great blessing. Thus it continued, until this great city contained more than a dozen banks, which, in a little time, issued more paper than all the property in the place above and under ground could redeem. Every body could get as much money as they wanted ; consequently

every body ran in debt, and nobody would work, because they could live without so degrading themselves. The whole community became independent, except that every body was dependant on banks, and no man could call his house his own. People talk of the golden age—but it was nothing to the age of paper. Houses grew up like mushrooms, and tumbled down as soon. Property attained to such a high price that nobody could afford to buy it, but those who had no money; and every man, disdainng the pursuits of regular industry, became a dashing speculator, and went neck or nothing—which was another very fine thing. The staple commodities of this town attained to such an enormous and extravagant value, owing to the great plenty of paper-money, that they cost more at home than they would sell for abroad; and thus that pernicious race of men, the merchants, was ruined—which was another exceeding fine thing. But the beauty of the whole system was, that it enabled a man to live in splendour all his life, leaving it to his children to pay his debts, instead of ruining their morals by leaving them a great fortune, as had hitherto been fashionable. Having produced this consummation, so devoutly to be wished, nothing was wanting but to render it as permanent as the nature of things would permit. So they petitioned the legislature, which presided over the destinies of this great city, stating that they had established these banks in the teeth of the laws, to the which they had been induced by their great respect for the legislature which enacted the laws, and

that therefore justice demanded that this violation of the law, and this respect for the lawgivers, should be duly acknowledged, by legalizing these banks as a reward for their breach of the laws! This reasoning was irresistible, and charters were given them in a lump, as an inducement to others to break the laws, and respect the legislatures.

The example of this great paper city has been followed in the neighbourhood, in all directions, so that there is scarcely a town, that is to say, a cluster of a dozen houses, in this part of the world, that has not one or more banks. Some are smitten with the prospect of sharing in the spoils of honest industry, which pays all the tax of the depreciation of money; and honest men are frequently forced to become accomplices rather than victims. The country is puffed into an appearance of bloated prosperity, which deceives the unwary, but is in reality weakened most essentially by this precarious expansion, and impoverished, in fact, by the loss of a portion of its export trade, owing to the unnatural high price of every staple article at home, as well as by the comparative decrease of the value of incomes arising from the solid source of real capital. Men of the largest landed estates cannot cope with the expenses of a dependant on a bank, and must either shrink from a comparison with these upstart, unreal pageants, who have bank directors for their friends, or join the current, mortgage their estates, live splendidly, die insolvent, and leave their children beggars.

Interest makes men plausible, if not ingenious, and

I have heard many specious arguments in favour of this paper system, which, in my mind, is more pernicious to the morals, manners, and real permanent prosperity of this country, than any one cause, or all other causes put together, not excepting whiskey.

It strikes at the root of honest industry, and industry is the foundation of the good morals of nine-tenths of mankind, who, for want of other sources of amusement in idleness, would become vicious merely to pass the time. The denunciation of a life of labour on fallen man was the greatest blessing that ever accompanied so great an evil as was that fall. But the facility of getting paper-money from banks has converted a great portion of the tradesmen and labouring classes into *speculators*. They have got a habit and facility of running in debt, which renders them careless of incurring debts. This, in a little time, does away that salutary unwillingness to run in debt, which is the safeguard of honesty, and at last causes an unprincipled carelessness, as to the fulfilment of pecuniary engagements and the payment of debts, except by new discounts, which increase them.

The torrent of *speculation* is rolling through this land with the width of an ocean, and the rapidity of a torrent. You can't listen to the conversation of any two men at the corners of the streets, without hearing it repeated over and over again; and those who talk of nothing else, can prate of mighty speculations. Every soul seems mad, and plunges into the torrent, to sink or swim as chance may direct;

for those who have nothing to lose, don't much care who it is that pays the penalty of their failure. No matter if some dozen families are ruined. The hope of getting rich at one dash, however forlorn, stimulates the sturdy beggar of a speculator, who first is supported by banks, and afterwards by the public credulity. The slow, and sure, and blameless gains of honest industry, are beneath his attention. The mechanic, who has gathered a little independence, or what would be an independence, were it not for the *rags* in circulation, by plodding for years, urged on by pernicious example, or pernicious sophistry, must, forsooth, build houses upon speculation, without knowing whether there is any body to live in them. The banks, which are now so numerous that the ordinary demands of trade do not employ their capitals, will gladly lend him money, and take a mortgage on his houses. If he pays, very well, if not, so much the better, the bank seizes his property, and thus exchanges paper for house and land; which is turning a penny, you know, pretty handsomely.\* So fares it with almost every other class of the community; and even the honest farmer,—he whom nothing but the war of elements can touch, is seduced by the pernicious facility of getting paper-money from one of these little manufactories of rags in his neighbourhood, into a thousand schemes of improve-

\* I have been assured, by a most respectable gentleman of the bar, that *three-fourths* of the judgments obtained in the supreme court of the state of New-York, within the last three years, were in favour of banks, against real property. What a thriving exchange—lands and houses for rags! EDITOR.

ment and speculation. The failure of one begets the want of more money, which is freely supplied, till it amounts to nearly the value of his land. But the time for paying debts, like the period of death, will come at last. The farm is advertised for sale in time of great scarcity, when it will bring the least money; is sold for just enough to pay the bank mortgage; the poor speculating farmer is thrust from the spot of his inheritance, and left to begin the world anew—and for many a long year neither he nor his family are in want of *rags*. Thus the real wealth and property of the country changes hands, and the manufacturers of *rags* become the proprietors of great landed estates. The farmer is seduced into an acquiescence in this great system of *swindling*, by the high price he receives for his produce; and the mechanic by his wages being raised. But instead of being the richer, they are, in reality, the poorer for it; since, with the high price they now receive, they cannot procure the same necessaries or luxuries they did when their produce and their labour was cheaper. They, with the rest, pay tribute to the gentlemen who speculate on *bank capitals*, as they are ludicrously called, and the other gentlemen who create these capitals by the aid of a paper-mill; thus making as much money as they want, and dividing nine or ten per cent. on their own debts!

To show the effect of country banks, I will relate a little example which came under my own observation a day or two ago, and gave rise to these speculations, I believe. We stopped in the evening to

sleep at the house of a Dutchman, who kept a sort of traveller's rest, rather, I believe, lest he should be obliged to entertain travellers for nothing, than from any great desire to add to the profits of his farm. It was a scene, and an evening, that made me melancholy with the fear of some day dying, and leaving a world so lovely. The house was on a rising ground, behind which, and close at hand, rose a majestic mountain, not savage with rocks and rugged precipices, but exhibiting a green foliage unbroken to the very top, whose graceful, waving outline, brought to the mind images of peace. In front was spread the richest little vale I ever saw; where meadows, and corn-fields, the latter rising half a dozen feet above the fences, and the former, speckled with sheep and cattle, succeeded each other in rich luxuriance. At one extremity ran a branch of the river Shenandoah, half hid among the high elms and sycamores; and a little further on rose a peaked hill, behind which the sun was setting. Every thing seen was peace—and every thing heard was silence,—for it so accorded with the silence, as to render it more striking in the intervals. We sometimes heard the cow-bell—sometimes the negro's sonorous and resounding laugh, which waked the mountain echo,—sometimes his inimitable whistle, emulating the fife,—and occasionally his song, which, heard in the distance, was singularly melodious. As long as I live, I shall never forget that scene.

It was, in truth, a place for a man to make his home; and the honest Dutchman, for such he ap-

proved himself, not only by his dialect, but by his invincible predilection for rich bottoms, seemed to think as much; for he appeared to be actually contented, a rare thing in this world. In the calm leisure of the dusk of evening, he and his dame, and a jolly dame was she,—good-humoured as a lark, and round as a dumpling,—came and sat with us in the porch; he, with his pipe; she, with her snuff-box, bearing on its lid the likeness of Commodore Porter. This custom is highly eschewed by all orthodox English travellers; but for my part, if a man is not wilfully obtrusive, and transgresses no law of etiquette that he knows of, I like his company, and can generally get something amusing or instructive from him.

Mine host seemed such a rare comfortable dog, that I determined to know, if possible, how he became so; and in order to entitle myself to his history, told him mine beforehand, for country people are always a little curious. The substance of the burgomaster's, or justice's (for so he announced himself) story, was as follows:

“I married,” said he, “at the age of twenty-six, and my wife, though perhaps you won't believe it, was reckoned a beauty in her day. My fortune was three hundred and twenty-eight pounds, and a negro man; and my wife brought me a great chest filled with, I dare say, six hundred petticoats and short gowns, which have lasted till this day; so her clothing cost me nothing. This was what we had to begin the world with. After looking about a little, I bought this farm, which being much worn, and out of order,

I got cheap. The money I had was enough for the first payment, and the rest of the purchase-money was to be paid in three equal annual instalments.

“The farm, as I said, was then in poor order, the fields a good deal worn out, the fences bad, and the house very old. But there was no time to groan; for the year was coming about, and the money must be paid. So Tom, and I, and often my wife, turned out early and late, and worked like horses; and after selling my harvest, I carried my first payment home in hard dollars.

“Well,” continued the Dutchman, “the next year I went on still better, paid the money still easier, and at the end of the third year, my farm was my own. The times, somehow or other, mended with me every day; and what is very odd, though my wife always brought me at the time of each payment a chopping boy, yet when I returned from making the last, she brought me two fine girls, I suppose because she knew we could now afford it. We now thought to make ourselves comfortable by building a better home, for we had but a poor one before; so in the spring I set to work as soon as the frost was out of the ground. I burnt my own bricks and lime, from my own limestone and clay, and furnished timber and boards from my own farm. In the meantime, the war came on; and as it is an ill wind that blows nobody good, the number of wagons passing this way increased every day, because the produce could not go round by sea. I sold all the produce of my land at my own door, except my wheat. If that

was high, I could afford to send the flour to market; and if not, I cut it into *shorts*, to feed the wagoners' horses. By the time my house was finished, it was paid for; and now I don't know what I shall build next, for my part. I am forty-three years old. I have twelve hundred acres of as fine bottom as any in Virginia,—a good grist and saw mill, a tolerable good wife, if I could only make a fine lady of her—but she sticks to the old chest of clothes like a moth,—a decent house over my head; and I owe no man a shilling, except Tom, who, by now and then raising a little grain, shooting a deer, and waiting on travellers, has in my hands enough to buy his freedom. But he is free already, for that matter, and knows he can go where he pleases."

"Pray," said I, "did you ever get a discount?" "A discount,—what's that?" said the Dutchman. "Did you ever borrow money of a bank, and mortgage your land for it?" "No, no," said he, "I wasn't such a fool as that. My poor neighbour, whose house you see over the river yonder, with the windows broke, and no smoke to the chimney, played a trick of that kind; but his farm is soon to be sold at vendue, and I think of buying it. His family were in great distress, though we helped them on a little to get to the back country, where, I hear, they are doing pretty well again."

I will not trouble you with the moral of this story, but conclude this long letter by bidding you beware of discounts. Good night.

## LETTER XXXV.

DEAR FRANK,

THE tongue touches where the tooth aches, as the saying goes; the English of which is, that people are apt to talk of what annoys them most at the moment. Thus, the great evil under which I have laboured of late is paper-money, which, throughout the whole of our country, has assumed so many different shapes, and sustained such an infinite variety of value in different places, that a man is obliged to go to a broker to get shaved, as the phrase is, as often as to a barber. This is the true signification of money being the root of all evil. The frequent recurrence of these vexatious visits, during my travels, has brought my mind to think seriously on this subject, and the result of my observations and reflections is, that the present *paper* system is the most pernicious to the real prosperity, morals, and independence of this country, of any ever devised by the cupidity of man. It has already worked the most dangerous inroads on the virtuous independence, which was not long since the lot of all; and if suffered to continue, will place the whole community in a state of abject dependance on banks.

Power, which used to follow land, has now gone over to paper-money. The landholder does not fee

this as yet, so extensively as he will by-and-by, when he will find his stinted independence fade away, in comparison with the short-lived splendours of the bank-dependant, and he obliged to enlist in the honourable band of bank-paupers. The period of his ruin will be dated from his first discount; for wherever a false capital is created, it will in time swallow up the real one, as a vacuum attracts and absorbs the surrounding air.

The other evening I went to sleep, with these and such like thoughts in my head; and as people are apt to dream of what they think of when awake, I was possessed with the following curious vision.

Methought I was poring over a bank-note, which I think was issued from a place called "*Owl-Creek*," and happening to say to myself, "Where the deuce did this come from?" I was answered in a small squeaking voice as follows—at first I could not tell where it came from, but on closer examination, I discovered a motion in the bill of the figure of an owl, with which the note was decorated—

"I am the offspring of a bandana handkerchief, that was once worn about the neck of a learned East-Indian, acquainted with all the arts of Eastern magic, and a piece of Irish linen, whilom part of the nightcap of an old Irish witch. This accounts for my being gifted with speech. I was born in a paper-mill, and the first thing I recollect, was being nearly squeezed to death under a piece of copper, which bruised me black and blue all over. Then I was taken to the bank, and underwent a sort of transubstantiation,

under the magic hands of the president and cashier ; for from a rag, I became converted into solid gold, or at least something nearly as valuable.

“ I had not been here long, before I was counted out to a young man who carried me to his master, a merchant, who lived in a fine house, drove a splendid equipage, and fared sumptuously every day. I felicitated myself mightily that I had got into such comfortable quarters ; but *soon* discovered all was not right with my new master. As he carried me in his pocket, I had an opportunity of watching him closely, and hearing all that he said, or others said to him. I learned, that he had set out in business with a reasonable capital, which, under prudent management, would have led him to a comfortable independency ; but was seduced by the example of those around him, and by the facility of getting discounts, into borrowing money of the banks, and trading on credit to a great amount. But he learned too late that the man who is always borrowing and paying interest for his money, is working for his creditor, and not for himself. At the time I saw him he was a wretched dependant on the caprice of banks, to whom, in the course of business, he had paid in discounts what would have been to him an immense fortune. He could not sleep at night ; for the sun never rose that did not see him in debt for more than he could pay. Every day he was obliged to run round to all his acquaintance to borrow money to pay his notes ; and not a day passed over his head, that he could tell whether he would not be openly a bankrupt before

night; for all depended on the caprice of bank directors. To add to his distresses, his wife and children, fancying him a man of immense riches, indulged in every species of extravagance, and he had not the courage to tell them a few months would probably make them beggars. In fact, I had not been with him long, before the banks, either from necessity or caprice, drew in their discounts; my master failed—the banks got all his property; the rest of his creditors got nothing; and his wife and children found themselves in beggary, with a thousand artificial wants to pamper. His furniture was seized and sold, and the whole family crept into a small house in the suburbs. This I learned afterwards, for I did not accompany them, having been passed away to a shopkeeper, by my master's lady, the day before he failed, in part payment for a cashmere shawl for which she gave a thousand dollars.

“My new master was a brisk, stirring little man, who made more bows than a dancing-master, but got well paid for them, by cheating faster than he bowed. He always sold his goods at first cost, pledged his honour to every thing, true or false, and possessed that inveterate habit of petty roguery, so common to people who have no other object in life but making money. Judging from his style of living and his habits, I at first thought he must be very snug and comfortable in his circumstances, till all at once I found myself in a drawer, with two or three of those pleasant invitations beginning with, ‘Your note for so and so, becomes due, &c.’ Whenever my master

received any of these mementoes, he was seized with an alarming fit of the fidgets, and there was a terrible 'whipping of the cat,' as it is called, on the days the notes became due. This whipping the cat, is nothing more than a parcel of traders puffing at one another's heels of a morning, to borrow money. One day one man is hunted for his money, and the next, when his own note becomes due, he hunts his neighbour, so that their funds are a common borrowing stock; and he who hunts as Actæon one day, is a hunted Actæon the next. In short, having one day an accidental peep at my master's books, I discovered that he had been actually insolvent for more than five years. About a week after I had been with him, he sent me to a certain bank, to help take up a note-of-hand. In passing through the directors' room, I heard it decided not to discount any more for my late master and his friends, as they were no longer safe, and did not owe any thing to the bank. So a few days after I heard it whispered, that they had thrown out all their notes. My old master broke first; he fell against his neighbour, and like a row of bricks, they all tumbled, one after the other, and took the benefit 'of the act.'

"Before I had been here long, I was taken out of the bank by one of the directors, each of whom had a regular accommodation of fifty thousand dollars to *shave* notes-of-hand with. He carried me in his pocket some days, by which means I was present at some of their meetings on discount days, where I saw them refuse to discount notes, which my master

*shaved* afterwards on his own account ! I forgot to mention, that I was several nights deposited in the vaults of the bank, where, although this was one of the banks that paid specie, I give you my word there was not specie enough to pay a check of five thousand dollars. I saw but three small boxes of it, which was all that was there ; for being an owl, I could distinctly see, though it was dark. The way they managed to pay specie was this : all the traders were given to understand, that if they asked for the least quantity of specie, they would forfeit all claim to future favours from the banks ; and such was the miserable state of dependance of the greater part of the community, that not one out of a thousand dared to incur the penalty. This was called resuming the payment of specie ! I could tell you a great many tricks of these gentry, but it is not my interest to do so, since by injuring them I lose my own consequence in society, and am reduced to rags again.

“ In process of time, my master, the bank director, who was in the same state of abject dependance on banks with my former ones, passed me away to a shoemaker, in payment of a bill of two years standing. I was in hopes I had now got into the hands of an independent man, until I saw two or three bank notices, stuck up with an awl over his desk, to remind the honest man he owed more than he could pay, and thus encourage and quicken his industry, I suppose. I could not help wondering what could make this man such a fool, as to suppose he could grow rich by paying interest to other people, seeing that the

rate of interest is always considered the value of money, and what money will make, when applied to any certain and regular mode of business. I found it was the force of example, and that he did this because all his neighbours did the same. The example of every body is better than all the argument in the world; and the thing appeared to be perfectly natural. My worthy master, for such he was in fact, worked hard for the banks, and made his very lap-stone sweat to pay his discounts; but tempted at last, by the facility of raising money, he made a bad speculation in hides, and went the way of all flesh now-a-days. Before he became openly bankrupt, he made over all his actual property to secure his endorser, that being a debt of honour; the endorser paid it over to the bank—the bank got paid—and the rest of the creditors whistled for their money. My master went into the country to take the air, and keep out of the way of his creditors; and in the course of his travels passed me away to a tavernkeeper, in a small town, where there were two banks. The town was a place of considerable consequence, being on the banks of a river which was almost navigable for batteaux, and carried on a great trade in lime, coal, shingles, and brick-making.

“My master, the landlord, was a director of one of these banks, and carried me to a meeting of the directors, where, though an owl, I laughed till my feathers almost fell out, to see what a set of ragamuffins had got together. There were four tavernkeepers, three small shopkeepers, a brickmaker, a

splitter of shingles, a speculator, and two non-descripts, whose calling I could not make out. Not one of these had a decent coat to his back, except the president, who was a man of good landed estate, which he was silly enough to jeopardize in this way. For though the bank promised to pay every body out of '*the joint funds*,' I could never find out what or where these were; and it is pretty certain, that when the time of redeeming these debts shall come, the creditors will apply to the person among these directors who has most property, and levy the debt on him. As to the ridiculous idea that only the '*joint funds*' of these unchartered institutions are liable for their debts, it is just as preposterous, as to suppose that a man can get rid of his debts by advertising, before he contracts them, that he will only pay to a certain amount.

“These two banks made the village flourish to the eye; but this prosperity was only the bloom on the cheek of consumption. Great houses rose up in various parts, but they were all mortgaged to the banks, who lent the money, thus getting real property for rags of their own making. No man lived in his own house,—all belonged to the banks, who could at any time turn the village out of doors. Every thing was done on credit, for the village having few natural advantages, depended for its summer of apparent prosperity on the discounts of the banks. The shopkeeper traded, the tavernkeeper carried on his business, the brickmaker made bricks, and the shingle-splitter split his shingles,—with bank-notes which he

borrowed. The one endorsed the notes of the other; and if one failed, they all ran away together; for this is one of the great advantages of having nothing of one's own—a man can run away at a moment's warning.

“It was singular to see what strange notions these people had acquired with regard to the claims they had on the banks for money, whenever they wanted it. It often happened, that either from necessity, caprice, or a desire to foreclose certain mortgages, the banks drew in their discounts, and then there was such an outcry against the cruelty and injustice of the banks, as never was heard, because Mr. Such-a-one was obliged to stop building a fine house, for the embellishment of the town. Another could not go on with his tavern,—a third was obliged to stop digging his cellar,—a fourth was obliged to stop burning bricks,—and, in short, the whole world of the village stood stockstill, except several prosperous gentlemen, who found it convenient to run away on the occasion. Nobody ever thought of working in this happy village, because it was so much easier to borrow of the banks, than to earn money by honest industry. In some way or other, almost every man in the village was connected with a bank director, who helped him with a discount; and those who were not so fortunate, descended to all the arts of dirty subserviency, and became the tools of the mighty man, in order to get a discount. Every one, of course, became a speculator in something,—for the profits of a regular trade not being sufficient to

pay the creditor his interest, and support the debtor at the same time, he must resort to some extraordinary means to make money, and these means are generally wild speculations, that end in ruin. But for all this, every body insisted on it that the village was flourishing beyond all example, and that banks were great blessings.

“My master, the tavernkeeper, finding that owing to some new turn of the *balance of trade*—which I don't profess to understand, but which seems to account for every thing in this world—finding, I say, that I was beginning to depreciate on his hands, passed me away to a worthy farmer of the neighbourhood. Here I thought, to be sure, I should find independence; but alas! my poor master, too, was on the high road to the transfer of his land in exchange for paper-money. The brick-making bank-director had, it seems, the summer before, rode over to see him, and persuaded him to enter into partnership with him in the brick-making business. ‘I have no ready money to spare,’ said the farmer. The brickmaker soon let him into the secret of getting it, and assured him he could do it without being a dollar out of pocket. Allured by these golden prospects, the farmer endorsed a note drawn by the brickmaker: they got the paper-money, and set to work. But somehow or other, the farmer had received nothing yet, but was every now and then obliged to endorse another note, for, according to the old saying, ‘in for a penny, in for a pound.’ The catastrophe of all this is very obvious. A little while after I came into

the poor farmer's possession, he got to the length of his tether. The bank would discount no more,—the notes lay over,—the brickmaker ran away,—the farm was sold for just enough to pay the bank,—was bought in, by a director, for the bank,—and the honest farmer was a beggar. In fact, every thing I saw here convinced me, that the extent to which the wretched system of banking is now carried, is an ingenious contrivance to ruin people of real property,—to impoverish honest independence, by rendering it the victim of these splendid paupers, who invent an imaginary currency, create an empty ghost of money, which, by playing on the avarice or blind folly of men of real property, swallows them up, and transfers, by a sort of legerdemain, the wealth of the independent man, to the pockets of the pauper. It behoves the landed interest to be on the watch against these tempters, who persuade men to exchange their property for rags, or, ere long, they will be in the situation of the landholders of England, who are swallowed up by the paper system.

“The holders of land generally, are persuaded that they are great gainers by the enormous plenty of paper-money, which raises the nominal price of their produce; and the merchants are fully assured that these banks are essential to their existence. But they are assuredly mistaken, since every thing the farmer buys is raised in more than an equal proportion with every thing he sells. I have happened to hear it argued that this is nothing to the purpose, because the farmer sells more than he buys. True,

but the trader is no fool, and will put an advance on the little the farmer buys of him, that will indemnify him for the high price he is obliged to give for the produce of the farmer, which *he* consumes. So long, therefore, as the farmer buys any thing, he in effect gains nothing by the high price of his produce, since he only receives it in one hand to pay it out with the other.

“The merchants, it is true, have, a vast many of them, been living of late years by bank accommodations. But there is a reaction in every thing, and there is always great danger of their dying by them. Nothing indeed is more certain, than that the prodigious and disproportionate nominal capital now afloat in this country, will, ere long, injure our export trade, by enhancing the price of articles of export. Many of the great staples of the country are now so high here, that they cannot be sent to other countries without loss, as they are dearer here than any where else. Thus we shall see, if I am not mistaken, that the flour about to be shipped to England, even during the present great apprehended scarcity, will not sell for enough to cover the cost and expenses, and that many of the adventurers will be ruined. We see, too, that articles which we used to export, are now imported from other countries; and this importation will increase, in proportion as the phenomenon of our prices becomes known abroad.

“My master happened to have some dealings, the exact nature of which I could never fathom, with a person from the city of B——, into whose hands I

passed. He was going on a tour to the south, and thought he could pass me away to advantage. He was the president of a manufacturing and banking company at B——, the nature and character of which I will fully explain. The company had been incorporated by an act of the legislature, as a manufacturing institution. By way of creating funds to begin business with, and of which they were in exceeding great want, the first thing they did was to employ Messrs. Murray, Draper & Co., without whose assistance no banking company can get along, to prepare them a pretty copperplate, that would engrave a pretty picture. With this they struck off a large number of notes, with ‘CHARTERED BY THE STATE,’ in great capitals at the top, to gull the people. After issuing about fifteen thousand dollars of these, and purchasing machinery—(the people will take any trash for money now-a-days)—it was agreed at a meeting of the directors, that the president being the most honest-looking man of the set, should be sent on an expedition to the south, to buy cotton for the manufactory. Accordingly he set forth, with his saddle-bags filled with quires of blank notes, which he was to sign as occasion required. In passing through a certain great city, with fourteen banks to its back, he was taken up as a swindler, and tried for passing a fifty-dollar note of this precious manufacturing company. In the course of the trial the following facts came out, on the confession of certain directors of this company, whom the worthy president summoned as witnesses in his behalf.

“The judge had great difficulty in coming at them, for it seems each of these worthy gentlemen had been sworn to secrecy. ‘Honour among thieves,’ you know, is a sacred maxim; however, the judge at last unlocked the ‘secrets of their prison-house,’ by threatening to commit them for contempt of court, if they did not answer. Their scruples of conscience being thus overcome, it came out that the company never had any funds whatever, to answer their issues of bank-notes. The capital was composed as follows: First, machinery, &c. purchased with these notes. Secondly, notes-of-hand of the workmen employed by them, who were permitted to subscribe for a certain amount of the stock of the company, and work it out afterwards. Thirdly, eight dollars and sixty-two and a half cents placed in one of the banks—to swear by! This certainly was the perfection of the banking system of the present day; and I think might have furnished my friend and old master, the incorporated president, with some useful hints for the improvement of his paper-manufactory. The old system of banking was to pay the capital first, and then to issue notes; the present is to issue notes, and pay up subscriptions with *them*, which is certainly a great improvement, since, by this means, beggars can get on horseback, and ride to the d—l, if they please. I don’t know but what this will do well enough, till payday comes, and a hundred and fifty or two hundred millions of paper dollars are to be redeemed with silver. When that doleful period comes—and come it will, if the public confidence in

paper-money is thus every day weakened, by the creation of new banks, authorized and unauthorized—some of these banking institutions will dissolve, and fade away, and nobody will know where to go and get the money for their notes. Others will be sued for every five-dollar bill; the lawyers will have plenty of business, and no fees, except in paper-money; and instead of getting the money for a bill by asking for it in the good old way, we shall be obliged to go to law with a shadow, and purchase the assistance of those redoubtable fellows, John Doe and Richard Roe, who always make people pay dearly for their alliance.

“The issue of the trial was such as might be expected, in a district where fourteen banks and three corporations were hard at work making paper-money. It was dangerous to establish the precedent, that people who issued bank-notes without funds to redeem them, were swindlers; and so the worthy president was acquitted. His well-stored saddle-bags were restored, and he set forth, reassured and gay, to take in the flats of the south with his bank-notes, *‘chartered by the State.’* If the jury was warranted in the acquittal of this man, it would seem to imply, that there is no law either to prevent or punish such infamous impositions on the public credulity. It seems equally to follow, that it is high time for the legislatures to do their duty; and by passing a statute for that purpose, redeem themselves from a suspicion by no means uncommon, that some of them, at least, have more than once sold their consciences, and

sacrificed the public interests, to become accomplices in the roguery and gains of these swindlers of the nation. Though legislators, as we all know, are much above common men—though they are, as we all know, exempt from the usual frailties of our—I mean human nature; and elevated far above the temptations of self-interest; still, there is too much reason to suspect, that the *bonus* usually given on these occasions for public purposes, was not the only bribe offered and received on these occasions. However this may be, certain it is, that either by their folly, or knavery, their blindness or participation, a paper aristocracy has sprung up among the people, oppressive in the highest degree, and equally dangerous to their freedom as their morals. Not only in the cities, but in the country south of Connecticut river, are people losing their habits of industry, to become dependants on banks, and speculators in something or other; but what is perhaps still worse, men are daily more and more acquiring a habit of extravagance, supported by borrowing of the banks, and not by the regular profits of their estates, or their business. But the time is not far distant, when the landholder, and the possessor of real estate, will resume their proper station and influence in society, and no longer shrink into comparative insignificance before the momentary magnificence of some upstart, unreal pageant.”

How long the sage and learned owl would have gone on with his reflections I know not; for in rummaging my pocket for a pencil to note down some

of his remarks, which I thought rather apt, I happened to bring out a half-eagle, which I had preserved as a last refuge against poverty. Sir Owl was nearly frightened out of his wits at this unexpected apparition, and began to whoop and flap his wings at such a rate, that I awoke with the terrible screeching he made, as he flew up the chimney. Adieu.

## LETTER XXXVI.

DEAR FRANK,

INQUIRING at the post-office here, I got your letter, which, I honestly confess, made me laugh like a whole swarm of flies. Remembering what a hero you have always been at tea-parties, it diverted me out of measure to hear your complaints at being cut out by the little captain in the red coat, if coat it may be called, being, according to your description, destitute of skirts. This is the first time, it seems, the truth has been brought home to you, that the people of this country, and especially the genteeler sort, and most especially the fashionable belles, are still in a colonial state, and cherish pretty much the same notions as did their beautiful grandmothers, who figured at the little courts of the little governors of the little North American colonies.

The good city ladies who were belles some forty years ago, instil into the minds of their aspiring granddaughters the most romantic ideas respecting the beaux, who figured in regimentals, about his excellency the governor's drawing-room; and who, they insist upon it, were a different race of beings from those of the present day. It is to be observed, that ladies who have once been belles, attribute the absence of those attentions paid them when they were

young and beautiful, to a change in the nature of man, instead of the loss of their youthful attractions.

Hence it is that you hear them dwelling with such complacency upon the parties given at the government-house, before the war—of the politeness of his excellency, Sir what-d'ye-call-um—the polished manners of the *Honourable* Major *this*, and the chivalrous gallantry of Lord *that*. Think of that, Frank,—a *lord!* I once met one of these ladies, who preserved, as relics, a pair of gloves, which she wore in dancing a minuet with Lord Dunmore, the revolutionary Cockburn. When, in addition to this influence, it is considered that the perceptions of the young misses are inflated with the habitual perusal of novels, the heroes of which are all foreigners, and, of course, gifted with superhuman excellence, it is no such mighty matter of wonder, that you, and your honest city beaux, should fare so ill, when unexpectedly brought into competition with a little red coat without any skirts; or that the young ladies should all run to the windows, when it passes, like the little white-headed urchins of the woods, when they hear the rattling of a carriage.

Still less is it to be wondered at, that so many of them have such an invincible propensity to become *strollers* about the European world; or that, in their insatiate desires to figure abroad, they often become victims to their own vanity, and marry swindlers or adventurers, under the temptation of being carried to Europe. Many of these have fallen under my observation, who thus chose to themselves a lot of

misery, and were either deserted when their fortunes were spent in profligate revelry, or condemned to drag out their existence in the society of worthlessness and vice.

You did not know Maria D——, I think ; but I did : and fairer prospects never dawned on the sunny eye of youth, beauty, and intelligence, than seemed to be her's. But, unfortunately, her mamma had once been in England ; and, as ill luck would have it for poor Maria, had danced in the same room, nay, I believe, in the same set with the Prince of Wales. Of course she could never talk or think of any thing else all her life afterwards. It was shrewdly suspected that she put her husband to a lingering death with this story ; and it is pretty certain that it caused all the misfortunes of my little associate, on whom nature had showered all the blossoms of spring, and who promised a rich product of delightful fruits in summer and autumn. But this unlucky dance spoiled all. The mother told the story, morning, noon, and night, and danced that fatal dance over and over again, to the same tune, until the young lady could think, and talk, and dream, of nothing but figuring at court, and dancing with princes and lords, whom she fancied something or other, she knew not what, but far above any thing on this side the water.

The mother never heard of a foreigner being in town that she did not get the fidgets, until he was brought and introduced to the daughter, who soon, in her anxiety to go abroad, actually paid such broad attentions to these exotics, that instead of being allur-

ing to the worthy among them, she became offensive. Unfortunately, though she had not fortune to tempt the avaricious, she possessed sufficient beauty to attract the voluptuary. One of these wandering creatures, who stroll about the world to cheat the rich, and betray the inexperienced; who come to our country no one knows whence, and live no one knows how; and who gain a footing in our social circles by means of this pernicious leaning towards foreigners,—chanced to come prowling that way, and was, as usual, brought to the house of the good lady who once had had the honour of dancing in the same set with the Prince of Wales.

He passed for a man of rank; talked of his noble relations—of going back to England—of the delights of courts, watering-places, and, in short, played off all that light artillery before which the citadel of woman's heart so often yields. The good lady-mother talked with the man of rank about certain lords whose names she had heard in England, and who were all his intimate acquaintances. He described them at a hazard, or rather at no hazard, for he soon discovered my lady knew as little as himself about them. In short, to make an end of a long story, the old lady fidgeted—the young one played off the fine lady—till, at last, with great apparent circumspection, the illustrious foreigner asked her hand in preference to running away with her, because she had a few thousand dollars portion. The catastrophe rapidly took place. As soon as he had got possession of the money, and was tired of his bride, he ran

away, no one knew where. Poor Maria never was presented at court; but pines away, in the most heart-sickening widowhood—a deserted wife: and the poor mother has never since told the story of dancing in the same set with the prince.

But admitting our young belles marry foreigners of the same rank with themselves, they will find, when they go abroad, that from being in the first society here, a society as essentially good as the best in Europe, they sink into one far below it in every respect; and instead of becoming the belles of a new and brighter sphere, settle into the circle of illiterate and ill-bred tallow-chandlers, and drysalters, well to do in the world, who go once a year in a buggy to Bath or Brighton. This happened to a sprightly friend of ours, you know, who married a merchant of Birmingham, or Liverpool, I forget which; who was, to use a mercantile phrase, *first chop* in our city. She went to England, expecting to be first chop there too; for she had yet to learn, that there are abroad factitious distinctions in society, independent of either riches, learning, refinement, or morals; and that the manners of people of the same grade materially differ on either side of the Atlantic. She persuaded her husband to settle in this country; and now, when asked about England, answers, like Cæsar, “It is better to be somebody even at home, than nobody abroad.”

This ridiculous foible, of fancying every thing the better for coming from beyond seas, is, however, confined principally to the more enlightened classes,

whose modesty is quite exemplary in this respect, only that they make themselves amends by claiming to look down on the ordinary people of their own country, just in the same degree that they look up to strangers, and reverence strange things. Far be it from me to quarrel with them for this interesting peculiarity. If they feel their own inferiority, it certainly is very amiable in them to show it.

For my part, Frank, I disclaim your insinuation that I have a certain stubborn, homebred prejudice against foreigners. I assure you it is no such thing. I allow them to be almost equal to my countrymen, and if that is not liberal, I don't know what you would have. I like to see them fleeing by thousands to this new Medina of the glowing west, as to a land of refuge; quitting the galling embraces of an old worn-out splenetic, pinching termagant, to revel in the arms of this buxom young damsel, and share in her warm, liberal welcome. It is such a testimony to the happiness of my country, to its people, government, and institutions, as fills me with more honest pride, than if I saw the land covered with palaces, and perishing amid the splendours of refinement. I would receive them with hospitality—most especially the children of brave Old Ireland, who become good republicans the moment they set foot on our soil—and admit them, if not to a political, at least to a social equality. They bring with them some habits and vices which I could wish they would leave behind, but these are accompanied by an accession of strength, and by various improvements in the arts,

necessary to a new country like ours. They are, for the most part, useful citizens, and as such should be cherished. Of course I except the occasional shipments of rogues and paupers, which I understand are made to this country, by the municipal authorities of some parts of Europe.

But at the same time, I think when they come here to escape the wrongs, oppressions, and poverty of their own country, or to acquire wealth, the least they can do is to be civil to us natives; if they speak at all, speak decorously of the country, its institutions and government; and refrain, while they condescend to stay among us, from talking or acting against our efforts to maintain our rights, or resent our wrongs. I do not wish them to forget the land of their birth, in their gratitude to the land of their adoption, nor to turn against the bosom of their mother land. But, in my opinion, they should at least be neutral in the struggle. This was not the case during the war which has just come to a close, and whose commencement was signalized by an inglorious defeat at Malden, that was gloriously contrasted by a victory at New-Orleans, to which modern history affords no parallel, in the disparity of loss on either side.

Many of those that had lived more than half their lives in this country, and amassed enormous fortunes under the protection of our laws, used their influence to impede the operations, and paralyze the efforts of the government. They aided in assailing the conduct and character of Mr. Madison; they exerted every

effort to prevent the success of his financial schemes, and thus rob our country of its means of defence; they mourned our victories, and rejoiced in our defeats. In this I confess they had too many examples among our native-born citizens; yet still, in my opinion, they had no right to interfere at all, except in behalf of the land in which they were at that moment, and had been for years, enjoying the rights of citizens, while they were forgetting their duties.

You tell me that the natives of some of these countries, who are sufficiently numerous to make their influence felt in elections, have openly combined against the Americans, for the purpose of forcing these last to admit them to a share in the representation of the city. They insist, you say, on having some of their countrymen on the assembly ticket, or in case of a denial, threaten to oppose it. This I cannot but think highly indecorous in strangers, who never have had reason to say, or think, that their rights and interests were not sufficiently attended to in the legislature. For a time, at least, they should be content with the protection of a just and beneficent government, without attempting to usurp a share in its administration. They should wait till they comprehend the machine, before they attempt to guide it. They should be careful, too, to amalgamate themselves as soon as possible with the great mass of native citizens, instead of setting up a separate interest, and thus, perhaps, giving the latter the hint to combine their far superior numbers, in one great effort to put them down. A respectable minority is

always of sufficient weight in our country, except when it aspires to dictate to the majority. From that moment it is nothing.

I have now, I hope, satisfied you that I have no prejudices but such as every man ought to cherish in favour of his country; and no antipathy, except to her enemies. So far from feeling ashamed of these feelings, I glory in them, and would not exchange them with the most exemplary universal philanthropist of the age. I confess I am very apt to confound a man without prejudices, with a man without principles, and to place the lover of all mankind on a par with him who cares for nobody in particular. The social feeling is founded on a preference of friends, relatives, and associates, over strangers; and the principle of patriotism arises from a preference of our country over all the rest of the world. The equal love of all mankind is anti-social in the highest degree; it fritters away the social feeling entirely, and is fatal to those gentle affections of the heart, that constitute the great cement of society. It strikes at the root of gratitude, friendship, and all the ligaments that knit man to man; it undermines the basis of that neighbourly good-will which arises from a reciprocity of kind offices and mutual assistance; it destroys the wholesome influence which the sense of a common cause and common interest has on the feelings and affections of brothers, friends, and countrymen; and if acted upon universally, would produce, not universal harmony and love, but universal discord and indifference. The lover of all mankind is gen-

erally one who makes a trade of philanthropy, and picks the pockets of his neighbours for the purpose of lining his own. I am not of that school. In the words of the homely old song,—

“I love my father, I love my mother,  
I love my sister, I love my brother,  
I love my friends, and relations too,  
And I love my countrymen true blue.”

Farewell.

## LETTER XXXVII.

DEAR FRANK,

THERE WAS once a city in Argolis, from whence the descent to Tartarus was so short, that they always dispensed with the practice of putting a piece of money into the mouths of the dead to pay Charon. I slept last night at a town which certainly would have disputed precedence with that of Argolis, had it been situated in Greece. I will not mention its name—and if people find it out of themselves it will not be my fault.

We left it by daylight in the morning, and soon struck into a beautiful country, affording a charming contrast to the village we had left. We could not help wondering that people should prefer such a town to such a country, and quit the sober independence of rural life, to become pedlers in a market-town. In my mind the wisest answer ever given by an oracle, was that to the Ephesian, when he inquired where he should go and settle. He was told to fix his house where he saw peasants dancing, crowned with olives. This answer pictured a country fruitful, gay, and of a mild temperature; for it is only in happy climes that the earth produces olives—and wherever the peasants are seen dancing on the green, by the side of healthful and happy streams, we may

gather that the fruitfulness of the country affords them leisure from labour, and hearts to be gay. True, these blessings may be marred by the tyranny of a despotic government, or the exactions of a petty lord, yet still I have such faith in the influence of a mild and genial climate, and a fruitful soil, that I can never associate them with misery and want. It is in such situations that the human mind, perhaps, attains to the highest point of delicacy and refinement of which it is capable; and it is here, too, that it degenerates into the lowest degree of sensuality and corruption. Here the peasant has leisure from labour to cultivate his taste, and give reins to his imagination, and consequently the people will become musical, and poets will rise up in the rural fields. In a happy clime, where the juice of the grape supplies the place of intoxicating spirits or stultifying beer, leisure often begets refinement, instead of brutality, in the peasantry, and degenerates into effeminacy rather than rudeness.

The character of our country people, though varied by an infinite variety of shades, produced by a descent from various nations, is still uniform in many respects, and different from all others. They are most like the English, not only on account of a majority being of English descent, but because, like them, they are a working people, consisting, with few exceptions, of three classes of men, different in their vocations, but all equally laborious—the farmer, the merchant, and the mechanic, in which I include the labourers of all kinds attached to these different professions.

Each of these is equally stimulated by the necessity of employment or the love of gain, which is, perhaps, stronger here than elsewhere, because money is almost the sole ground of distinction in commercial towns—and for the additional reason, that here a man works more for himself, and less for others, than in any other country. Our taxes are light, and we have neither landlords or tithes to consume the products of industrious labour. The merchant labours for wealth as the sole means of acquiring distinction in a country where there is no aristocracy of birth or title—the farmer and mechanic, partly from the causes I just mentioned, and partly from causes connected with the climate of our country, which, in most of those parts which have been settled long enough to give a colouring to the national character, is subjected to long and inclement winters.

It may in truth be said, that one-half of the year, while the people of other climes, where music is heard in the fields and along the river-banks, are sporting like butterflies, our people are labouring to provide for the other half. The farmer is labouring to keep his cattle and family from starving in the long season, when the grass does not grow nor the fruits ripen. All this time, too, the labourer is toiling, not only to get a little beforehand, but to lay up his winter's wood and various other necessaries, and put his house in order to keep out the winter's blast. But in other more genial climates, where the flowers and the fruits appear in perpetual succession, and where the slightest cabin is sufficient to exclude the weather,

a man can play the butterfly, and sip the flowers all summer, without perishing with hunger and cold when the winter comes. A little labour satisfies his present wants, and the future, like the present, is easily supplied. In the intervals of his labours he can sit in the shade, when all nature is smiling around him, and give a loose to his imagination, if he has any. The happy temperature of the climate takes off his attention from his own personal feelings—for his teeth neither chatter with cold, nor is he rendered exanimate by the burning heat. It is then that the soul seems to assert its independence, and relieved from all participation in the cares of existence, becomes all feeling, all imagination. Then poetry will be sung in natural strains, and music will echo along the rivers or by the side of the mountains. It was the shepherd Orpheus who, in the pleasant land of Greece, first waked the spirit of poetry and music among the woods and rocks; it was the shepherds of Chaldea and Egypt who first studied the science of the stars, as they watched their flocks by night—and it is to the age of the Nomades that we owe the first dawnings of all those beautiful arts and sciences that adorn and embellish our existence. Two causes contributed to this: leisure, and a luxuriant climate. The first will do much; but it is the union of both that gives birth to music and poetry—which, if not twins, were born in quick succession.

For these reasons I don't believe in the story, that the arts, sciences and literature, came originally from the north. There was something, however, in the

clannish spirit and institutions of Scotland, that, in connexion with the shepherd life that subsisted more particularly in the highlands, together with the romantic scenery of that region, which seems to have had the same effect that genial climes had on other nations. The pastoral life, of all others common to the mass of mankind, affords the most leisure ;—the shepherd was relieved by his dogs from the actual labour of watching, collecting, and driving the flocks in his charge. In the summer they subsisted on the verdure of the mountain, and in the winter his chief was responsible for their food, since it was to him that they appertained. Even in this inclement and rugged region the mass of the people enjoyed a great portion of leisure, and being too poor to waste it in expensive amusements, resorted to minstrelsy and music to pass the time. Hence, in the days of feudal dependance and clannish affinity, were composed those delightful songs, and melting or inspiring airs, that thrill to the heart,—and I earnestly hope will stand their ground against that affected refinement which would ingraft the enervating productions of Italy upon the manly and nervous-race that peoples America. If we are to borrow our music and our song, let us imitate Scotland—whose poetry and music has a character of manly tenderness and incorruptible simplicity, that I would not exchange for all the poetry of Metastasio, or the effeminate strains of cotemporary musicians.

Do not mistake the foregoing profound speculations for a sighing after climates like that of Italy, and a

people like the Italians. I am only attempting to give a reason for the almost total absence of music in the country through which I have lately been travelling, as well as in almost every portion of the United States. In their love of music and poetry, our countrymen are certainly behindhand with the people of Europe; and, as a philosophical traveller, I felt myself bound in honour to account for the phenomenon, which I hope I have done to your satisfaction. Depend upon it that there is no unmixed good in this world—for even labour, which is the parent of all the hardy virtues, is equally the parent of a sordid indifference to the finer impulses of the mind. Where necessity or the love of gain impels us to uninterrupted toils, there will be every thing necessary to the eating and drinking part of life, but little to adorn or embellish our existence. The virtues that exalt a nation in power, by increasing its wealth, and defending its honour—the hardihood of spirit that bristles, if a finger is pointed at its rights or at its independence—the lofty feelings, that, shrinking from the shadow of servility, sometimes exhibit an appearance of rudeness—the intelligence that investigates and judges for itself, on every occasion—and the spirit of liberty that sometimes leans even to licentiousness—these are the constituents of a great people—and these are ours, although you may not find them much about where you are. For my part, I am content with these; they are too valuable to be exchanged for the fine arts, and if we must make a

choice, give me the virtues of men, rather than the amusements of connoisseurs. It does not mortify me that other people have better fiddlers, dancers, and sculptors than ourselves, so long as we beat them in spirit, freedom, plenty, and happiness.

The truth is, that mine honest, sanguine, and heels-over-head friend, brother Jonathan, is one of those people who are for eating their cake and having their cake, and reconciling all sorts of incongruities. He is for doing things in a great hurry, and would be free and hardy, with all the enervated refinements of slavery. Not content with all the enjoyments necessary to happiness, and all the essential characteristics of a nation destined to mighty things, the honest lad would needs strut about in all the gilded paraphernalia of pictures, palaces, and statues, that serve to amuse some nations into a forgetfulness of their chains. He is continually flaring away in the awkward second-hand finery of Europe, that gives him the appearance of a servile imitator, instead of coming out in his honest homespun, to challenge the respect of the world. The rogue often reminds me of a little fat, greedy urchin, with an apple in each hand, and its mouth full of gingerbread, whining and fretting, because it can't appropriate to itself at the same time a pretty picture or lacquered image on the mantelpiece.

You must excuse my rambling letters, remembering that I only promised to write to you on the express condition of steering to all points of the compass, if

I pleased. In the dearth of incidents I must draw upon honest little speculation, and tell you what I think, rather than what I see. However, my next shall be descriptive of something or other, unless I am again led astray. I meant to tell you about Berkeley Springs, which merited a description; but they slipped my memory somehow or other. Please Jupiter, you shall have it before long. Good by.

## LETTER XXXVIII.

DEAR FRANK,

EIGHT days ago we left the town of W——, famous for several things which I have forgot; so you have escaped a description this time—for which it is your duty to be thankful. From this place we crossed over to Berkeley Springs, a famous place, where the beau monde resort from all the country around. After riding across a mountainous track, exceedingly wild and rugged, in turning an angle of the road we suddenly opened upon one of the most beautiful and striking contrasts I ever saw. On a little greensward, skirting along the foot of a steep mountain, at least a hundred gay people of both sexes were rambling among the trees, just in the twilight of a mild summer evening. Oliver shouted at the sight, and even my philosophy shook in the wind at the view of so many fair damsels, every one of whom, dressed in white, put me in mind of white fringe upon a green petticoat. Till this moment, I had been exclusively in love with nature; but now, to my shame be it confessed, I began to comprehend the superiority of the beauties of art—by which I mean no reflection on the ladies.

The truth is, after having rambled a long while among the vast solitudes of nature—where a human

being is among the rarest of animals, and though certainly a fellow-creature, yet so different in tastes, manners, and acquirements, as to afford little affinity of mind, there was something exquisitely exhilarating, thus to break upon people resembling our accustomed associates, sporting gayly in the midst of the wild mountains. Perhaps there is no situation, in which we taste the pleasures of society with a keener zest, than when, after losing them for awhile, we meet with them associated with romantic scenery, and buried, as it were, in the bosom of nature. We had the good fortune, as well as the unexpected pleasure, of meeting old friends, and this tempted us to stay some time.

As it is the prevailing opinion among your fellow-citizens, that there is nothing genteel to the south of the Schuylkill, and no watering-place worth visiting, except Long-Branch, I will try and set you right in this matter. The truth is, these springs are as gay, as fashionable, and as delightfully situated as any I have ever visited. In all the constituents of a fashionable watering-place, Berkeley maintains a most respectable rank, inasmuch as it affords as great a variety of character, as many gay equipages, and gay people, and almost as great a lack of amusement, as Ballston or Long-Branch.

You meet with every distinct variety among the belles and beaux. To begin with the ladies. There is the sentimental lady, who must have blue eyes, by all means, and who it is indispensably necessary should be very fond of retirement—a preference

which she demonstrates by going in search of it every summer to a watering-place. Then there is the blue-stocking lady, who is all for the delights of literature, and who comes to watering-places because they are the resort of scholars and people of literary tastes. These ladies are a great terror to the race of bucks—because they are continually drawing draughts on their understandings, which these gentlemen can't conveniently pay at sight. But the most numerous class of ladies to be found at these resorts is, that of the regular built, systematic, determined, and invincible belles, who go about as roaring lions, seeking whom they may devour. Like strolling actresses, they are seldom seen twice in the same place, but, after playing off their airs and graces, becoming tired of, and tiring every body, vanish away, and never shine in that sphere again. These unfortunate belles are to be seen everywhere, flashing at intervals, like fireflies of a summer evening, dazzling occasionally, but never warming; and generally, like our aunt Kate, end in becoming very efficient members of some odd society for the propagation of—any thing but the human species. In enumerating the varieties to be found at a fashionable watering-place, it would be unpardonable to omit two classes of elderly matrons, who are very constant attendants on these establishments. The first are very piously scandalous; and, like the old lady in the Spectator, whom Rhadamanthus beckoned to the left hand, are so busy correcting the faults of others, that they have no time to attend to their own.

They are ever on the watch to repress any innocent ebullition of vivacity, and to poison every little moment of youthful gayety, by sour looks of reprehension, sideblow innuendoes, and appalling shakes of the head. The other class is that which marshals its daughters, nieces, and proteges to battle at these great marts, and stands on the alert to see that they don't fall in love with any body not well-established in business, or well to do in the world. But at the same time they exercise this matronly caution, they take every opportunity of showing the young ladies off to rich bachelors and prosperous traders, who have plenty of money—or what is just the same thing—plenty of credit. I cannot help here observing that there is a class of females one never meets at these places, except now and then, when we sometimes see a solitary one, pale, languid, and weak, whom the hope of recovery from some slow and sure malady, tempts from her home. I mean those who find their happiness in the domestic circle, and the enjoyment of that unobtrusive paradise, created, adorned, and consecrated by the exercise of domestic virtues. It is these which constitute that portion of the sex, among which men find companions who assist in bearing the burden of existence, instead of adding to its weight; who shed the brightest light when the storm of adversity thickens and blackens—and who, without stooping to any cares or occupations unworthy a gentlewoman, are guardians of the household of man, and the consecrators of his fortune. The sweetest days of summer are those

in which the sun, partly hid behind the light clouds, warms without dazzling; and the sweetest women are those who never shine, except to those they love. Ambition to become the wonder of the world, makes men gods or demons; but operating on women, only makes them ridiculous. It drives them so much into the world, that we become tired of seeing, or hearing of them; and too often, in the anxiety to gain the object, stimulates them to conciliate the vanity of men, by attentions and flatteries unworthy a modest and delicate female.

Of the beaux, who are most frequently to be met with at these fashionable watering-places, the more numerous class is generally composed of young fellows labouring under a sort of anti-maladie du pays. They have become tired of the same amusements, and the same people; they have paced up and down the same fashionable promenade till every body is tired of them; and they have been so often in the same society, that they have absolutely talked themselves quite out, and find it easier to get new auditors than new ideas. Of this genus there are two varieties. The one neglects the ladies, because he affects to despise them; but the real truth is, that he has been so much in the society of horses and dogs, that a *whoa* and a whistle are the extent of his vocabulary, and a bark and a neigh the limits of his comprehension. The other variety is composed of those who limit their attentions to asking a lady to dance, &c., and who stand sentry round a fashionable belle, with-

out saying a word, reminding us of a guard of mutes about the favourite sultana.

Next comes the spruce bachelor of sixty-five, who, having breakfasted and dined on single blessedness, is anxious to sup upon matrimony, by way of variety. This is generally a man with every thing comfortable about him at home, but who, not knowing when he is well off, goes to a watering-place to find a wife. Here, instead of pairing with one whose age, habits, and tastes, correspond with his own, he singles out a high-bred belle, who lives only for gayety and splendour, and who condescends to marry this reverend youth, for his riches and equipage. Instead of plucking a few flowers from the brink of the grave, the poor man gathers but thorns and briers—sinks into a piece of mere fuller's-earth, and ends at length with fulfilling the destiny of Swift's broomstick, which, in its last stage, was used to light a fire for other men to warm themselves by.

Sometimes, however, in this matrimonial trial, the lady is the dupe, and the bachelor the rogue. It not unfrequently happens, that the old gentleman who thus goes to a watering-place to seek his fortune, is on the eve of bankruptcy, and, while his last light is glimmering, makes a desperate attempt to catch some little unwary moth that flutters round his expiring taper. I have known many instances of this fraud, which would be truly lamentable, did not the woman who sells herself in this manner deserve her fate. As it is, her situation is painful in the extreme; for she has not only forfeited her own approbation, but

deprived herself of all claim to commiseration, without gaining the object of these precious sacrifices. It is a mutual fraud; both parties equally merit punishment—and both are unworthy of pity.

But in this review of the fashionable train, I must not forget the spruce little widower, with grown-up daughters, whom he makes a point to send to some distant boarding-school, that they may not stand in the way of a second engagement. People sometimes hug their chains, we are told, which accounts for a man marrying a second time; otherwise this phenomenon might puzzle the philosophers. The little widower generally succeeds wonderfully well, provided he can keep his grown-up daughters from rising up in judgment against him, and sports a handsome equipage. But even without this, he very generally succeeds somehow or other—either by superior enterprise, superior perseverance, or by possessing the art of rousing the young lady's curiosity about what happens in the state of matrimony. Women, as Rosalind says, "have no doublet and hose in their disposition;" and I am credibly informed of one woman who killed herself out of sheer curiosity to know how it felt.

To these varieties of the fashionable world, if we add a few *lusus naturæ* belonging to no distinct species, such as clever people, good women, invalids whom the doctors, in despair of curing or getting their bills paid, have sent to drink the waters, we have pretty much the motley group of a watering-place. Among these, however, one seldom fails to

find a little knot of pleasant people, with whom we are sorry to part, at the end of a week or two, the usual time of sojourning at such places. This happened to be our lucky lot; and it was in consequence of this that we staid nearly a week at Berkeley. There is a pleasant drawing-room here, in which the ladies meet to chat, or work, and play at chess, or devise some pleasant excursion. Every night or two there is a ball, in a very splendid room appropriated to that purpose; and in afternoons it is pleasant to stroll backwards and forwards, along the brook that skirts the green in front of the springs, that gush out from the foot of the mountain. There is a pavilion built over the spring, which is used for drinking, and two bath-houses, one for either sex. The spring which supplies the ladies' bath is one of the finest I have ever seen. It boils up from a fissure in the rock in the form of a cone, much larger than the crown of a hat, and forms a fine stream, in some places six or eight yards wide. This place was formerly the property of the family of Fairfax, once lords of a great portion of the tract of country called the Great Northern Neck of Virginia, situated between the Potomac and Rappahannock rivers. One of these potent chieftains vested the springs and a little tract around in trustees, to be chosen from time to time, for the use of all comers for ever. People using the baths pay a small sum, which is appropriated by the trustees to keeping up the repairs of the place, and other objects of utility and ornament. The head of the Fairfax family in Virginia, is a lineal

descendant of the lords of that name ; but the title has never been assumed by any of these consistent republicans, who justly consider such distinctions ridiculous in this country.

Among the peculiarities of watering-places, one may always notice a certain odd sort of rivalry prevailing among the ladies of the different sections or states of the Union. This is exhibited in a certain shyness and civility, and in the various little knots gathering together in different parts of the room, together with certain sly looks and glances that all fashionable ladies understand, and resent nobody knows why. When a female arrives, they sit in judgment upon her directly ; and if she does not possess the mysterious, inexplicable attributes of bon ton—whew ! marry come up !—and all that sort of thing. The ladies here were principally from Virginia and Maryland, and it was amusing enough to see how they measured distances, like strange gamecocks in the same barn-yard. I have been thus particular in my details, because the good citizens of your parts, who always call that the genteelest place which is most frequented by themselves, have not the least idea, that in the midst of the Virginia mountains there is a little spot, where is to be found all the airs, graces, paraphernalia, caprices, and elegancies of the most fashionable assembly. Every man is the centre of his own universe, and always considers that a strange place in which he is a stranger. Good by.

## LETTER XXXIX.

DEAR FRANK,

I RECEIVED the book you sent me by our friend T——, who came to Berkeley the day before yesterday, and thank you for it, for it has afforded me infinite amusement, not the less on account of its intrinsic follies, than for the numerous certificates of its merits, with which it was accompanied. It seems, now-a-days, as if our booksellers, who, of course, adapt themselves to the spirit of the times, dare not venture on the publication of a book without some little scrap of commendation from a Review, or a string of testimonials from divers worthy literary characters of this country, who regularly stand god-fathers to every new work, and most benevolently praise it in proportion to its demerits. By this method, the gentle reader is made to be fully satisfied of the merits of a book before he pays his money for it; and is relieved entirely from the trouble of exercising his own judgment. This way of getting a book into credit and circulation, is doubtless borrowed from the venders of quack medicines, who establish the wonderful virtues of their nostrums, and impose upon the credulity of mankind, by means of certain certificates they procure from ignorance and stupidity. But I have other matters in hand just now.

The most common infirmity which brings people to watering-places, is the disease of I don't know what, the symptoms of which appear generally about the beginning of July. The lady—for ladies are more generally subject to this disease than the other sex—first begins to complain of the intolerable heat of the town, and fans herself violently for several days. If this don't do, she begins to complain of weakness and want of appetite and spirits; and if this don't do, the doctor is called in; who, to get rid of a patient, whose disorder he knows to be incurable, recommends a trip to the springs. After this, if the lady is not permitted to go, the husband is voted an inhuman monster at all tea-parties.

It is inconceivable what trouble people take sometimes to gain amusement, when they set out on purpose. I have known many, at these places—expressly set apart for the reception of people who don't know what to do with themselves—who actually took more pains to keep awake all day, than a poor man does to maintain his family. Some will take romantic excursions into swamps to see the country; some will play billiards from morning till night; some will get under trees with a book, and try with all their might to recollect what they are thinking or reading about; and others will dress five or six times a day to pass the time. After spending a few weeks in this way, interspersed with a little flirtation with the married ladies, and a little love with the young ones, people begin to feel the value of home, and are very glad to get there again. Indeed, the great use

of these places is to make us in love with home, the comforts of which are greatly enhanced by the singular inconveniences of a watering-place !

Berkeley, in addition to its pleasant rural situation at the foot of a steep mountain, and its little green promenade by the side of the brook, has many pleasant rides on horseback in its neighbourhood. The most interesting of these leads to what is called the Caphon Rock, which is in fact a mighty mass of rocks, tumbled up on the top of a mountain, from which there is a noble prospect to the westward. One day I took a solitary ride there, while Oliver was gallantizing the ladies, a vocation for which his invincible good humour and unfailing vivacity, eminently qualify him.

The mass of great rocks, lying just on the western declivity of the mountain, would appear more singular, were such phenomena not so common on the mountains in this country. How they got there nobody can tell, or at least nobody but the geologists, who, like honest Sysiphus, don't mind rolling rocks to the tops of the mountains, even though they tumble down the next minute. From the summit of the highest point of this mass of rocks, there is a clear view of the valley of Caphon, or Cacapehon, as it is called in the maps. On the right of this valley, at its western boundary, the Potomac comes out from a break in the mountain, crosses it at the foot of another, in a line almost as straight as a canal, and loses itself again in the mountains at the eastern extremity of the valley. To the south is seen the

river Caphon, winding and turning in every direction, so as to form the appearance of several little green islands ; and at last, with a sort of affected reluctance, joining its waters with those of the Potomac, just before it breaks through the eastern mountain.

The valley is surrounded, on all sides, by high hills, beyond which, to the west, higher ones appear in continued succession, paler and paler, until they are lost in the Heavens, by becoming confounded with the blue sky. Houses were dispersed at solitary distances, whose curling smoke, as it rose out of the trees, added to the peaceful character of the scene, and divested it of that melancholy loneliness, which affects us in contemplating those beautiful landscapes, which have never yet been appropriated by man. After awhile, I descended the mountain to where the two rivers form a junction, and forded them both, for it was a very dry season, and the streams of this country were very low. I could see along the banks of the Potomac, where the logs were lodged, and in the crotches of trees, sedge and branches deposited by the waters, at least twenty-five feet above the present level of the current. You can form no idea how these mountain streams swell with the rains or the melting of the snows ; or with what tremendous force and velocity they roll and roar along at such times.

In returning from the valley, I went to take a last look from the rock. It was becoming cloudy, or rather hazy, and little showers were falling in some parts, while others were glowing in the sun. The

light and shade was disposed in endless variety, and the general haze of the atmosphere softened the objects appearing through its medium, as past scenes are mellowed and endeared by the slight obscurity thrown over them by the mists of memory.

I don't know what may be the moral or religious influence of such scenes, since, although they assuredly give birth to pure and lofty emotions, they are apt to make us too much in love with this world. One thing, however, is pretty certain, that it is among such regions as these, composed of rugged mountains and rural vales, that the people are found most attached to their home, and modes of life. It is such scenes that they are found most to lament when far away, to remember the longest, and to cherish the most dearly. The natives of cities never get the *maladie du pays*; for paved streets, brick houses, and rattling carts, possess neither the charms nor the music of rural vales, hid in the bosom of the hills, or clear streams murmuring among moss-covered rocks. Liberty, too, dwells in the mountains, and where she lives, men are happier than any where else; for they are exempt from the train of petty insults and impositions, practised on the subservient race, and from that galling sense of inferiority, which, when they cease to feel, they are little better than brutes, and when they do feel, make them little less than miserable. Good by.

## LETTER XL.

DEAR FRANK,

FOUR days ago we left Berkeley Springs, and arrived here the day before yesterday. The country through which we passed is limestone, but whether of the primitive crystalline granular transition, or fletz formation, I neither know or care. It has several sulphur springs, one of which, near Martinsburg, is much frequented. In riding along the road on Saturday afternoon, we saw about a dozen fine tall young fellows, in white shirts and trowsers, shooting at a mark with rifles. This is a customary recreation, in the interior of this state, as well as in the western country; and from this early habit arises that fatal precision in firing, which cost the invader so dear at New-Orleans, and other places, during the late war. While this practice continues, and every man can keep a gun without being sent to Botany Bay, we must ever possess a decided superiority in war, over other nations, where the people are so insensible to the blessings they enjoy under a good government, that they are obliged to be kept without arms, for fear they should be stupid enough to turn them against their best friends. Our good people, being better satisfied in this respect, are relied on for the defence of their government, rather than

feared for their hostility. They are enjoined, under a penalty, to furnish themselves with arms, instead of being obliged to fill their gun-barrels with tallow, and bury them in bogs, as in poor Ireland, that unreasonable nation, which even centuries of oppression have not yet reconciled to bondage.

Martinsburg, where we dined and slept, is bedded in limestone rocks, that appear in various fantastic forms above the surface, and give it a singular character of ruggedness. The waters seem, on some occasion long past, to have been mightily troubled in this place; and the famous geological crust of the earth has tumbled in at various places very abruptly, causing divers holes and ravines, bedded and sided with limestone. In passing from this place to Harper's Ferry, for the first time in my life I began to think seriously that there was some ground, or rather some water, for the system of Mynheer Werner. As for Oliver, he suddenly relapsed into the dropsical system, and deserted from Doctor Hutton to honest Mynheer Werner. The town of Martinsburg is situated in the midst of a rich and beautiful country, exhibiting the bright verdure and variegated surface common to limestone countries, and glowing with golden fields of wheat,—a nobler source of independence to their owners, than paper banks, or mines of gold. Many Quakers are settled in this district of country; and wherever they are, peace, industry, and all the sober habits of life abide, and the earth is sure to put forth her best array. Were I to attempt the personification of peace, instead of the

olive-branch and the cornucopiæ, I would take the statue of old William Penn, as it stands in the hospital-yard in Philadelphia, with his broad-brimmed hat, and coat without buttons.

I must not forget to tell you that the only vestige of ancient chivalry I have seen in all Virginia, occurred at Martinsburg. The day being warm, we were sitting, probably to the number of twenty, on benches, at the shady side of the hotel, fronting on one of the principal streets, when a man rode furiously by on horseback, and swore "he'd be d——d if he could not *lick* any man who dared to crook his elbow at him." This, it seems, is equivalent to throwing the glove in days of yore, or to the boyish custom of knocking a chip off the shoulder; but, alas! well was it said by Neddy Burke, the days of chivalry are gone,—and may they never return, say I. Instead of ten thousand fists leaping from the pockets of the supine spectators of this magnanimous outrage, they affected to take no notice of it; and, by Heaven! not one accepted the challenge! Degenerate days!—and how unlike the fabled times, when such a gallant *raid* as this would, according to aunt Kate, have cost many an eye, and many a bloody nose.

After stopping a little while at Shepherdstown, a neat village on the banks of the Potomac, we proceeded to Harper's Ferry, where we arrived at four o'clock, and decided to stay a day or two, as it suits both Oliver's taste and mine; his, because it is a capital place for finding out how the world was

made ; and mine, because it exhibits a combination of natural beauties, to be met with in no other place that I have seen. Mr. Jefferson has sketched it with a few masterly touches ; but luckily for us travellers, he has rather given its effect on the imagination than the senses. The minute description of the scene, as it presents itself on a more particular examination, remains to those who come after him, and to these I shall confine myself. I love to explore these grand and beautiful scenes of nature, and to excite the curiosity of others to do the same ; for I know of no source of pleasure more pure, or more likely to draw the mind from debasing contemplations, or sensual pleasures. The voice of nature, uttered amid rocks, and mountains, and roaring floods, is the voice of God, and as we listen to it, we become wiser and better. I shall never think myself destitute of virtuous feeling, while I can enjoy, with enthusiasm, the charms of nature. To you, who have seen nothing like Harper's Ferry, the description may be gratifying ; for if, as is generally the case with descriptions, it conveys no definite picture to your mind, it may chance to tickle your fancy, which is just as well.

We had been told by several persons, that Mr. Jefferson's sketch of this place was highly exaggerated, and that it would by no means realize our anticipations. I am not able to tell what may have been the anticipations of other people ; but certainly, I was more than satisfied with the reality. I believe it will be found, that those who are not familiar with the

higher efforts of nature ; who know not, by experience, the limits to which she is generally confined in all her operations, almost always create to themselves disappointment, by their own wild and undisciplined expectations. Experience having furnished them with no standard of the sublime and beautiful, they invariably substitute the creations of their own fancy for the descriptions of the writer ; and finding, when they come to see it, that the picture was overcharged, accuse him of a deception, which, in fact, is practised by their own inexperienced imagination. I have heard people say, that the Falls of Niagara did not come up to their expectations ; and could only account for their disappointment by supposing, what was undoubtedly the fact, that they had formed a picture in their imagination, to which nothing in nature afforded any analogy.

The stranger will find here many interesting objects, not noticed by Mr. Jefferson, and he will not find many things described by others. For instance, the fall of thirty feet, perpendicular, noticed by Mr. Weld, who, it is believed, never visited this place, and therefore may be excused for a trifling blunder of this sort. I looked hard for it, but give you my word, it eluded all my researches, and became invisible, like many other things described as having an actual existence in this country, by divers travellers. In descending to the little village, at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah, on the Virginia side, just at the turning of a point in the road, which is cut or worn through the solid rock, the chasm in

the Blue Ridge, through which the waters flow, bursts at once to the view. It is faced, on either side, by two most lofty barriers of solid rock, that seem to have arrested the wreck of the mountain. They are both rugged, and of the full height of sublimity;—that on the Virginia side approaching a perpendicular; the other passing beyond it, and hovering over the ferry-house with tremendous threatenings.

In approaching the mountain to make their last effort, after effecting a junction, the two rivers, especially the Shenandoah, have had mighty struggles, and have scattered the rocks and hills to the winds of Heaven in the conflict. The rocks are left bare, pointed, projecting, and rugged, as if they had been violently broken off by some irresistible agency; and the beds of the river, before and after their junction, are composed of rocks above and under the surface, through which the waters roar and foam, with restless and terrible impetuosity, for some miles. High among the rocks and precipices, are a number of cottages, belonging to the workmen at the armory; and higher still, on the summit of the cliff, resides the American eagle, emblem of our freedom, which is unassailable as the rock on whose side he builds his nest. Here he rests safe from every danger, since no sportsman, from above or below, can reach him.

There is a variety, a succession, and an infinite combination of objects, in this place, and its immediate neighbourhood, sufficient to give occupation and interest to several days. Three accessible points, however, present, in my mind, the finest views that

are to be seen, except from the summit of the cliffs, whither none but very enterprising travellers attempt to ascend. The one is from a very singular rock, called Jefferson's Rock, in compliment to the late president. This juts out at the side of a steep hill, a little way up the Shenandoah, and from it there is a fine view of the chasm in the mountain, and the noble landscape seen through the vista. The opposite side of the river is strikingly grand, consisting of a mountain almost perpendicular, in some places formed of bare rocks, in others, covered with dark and melancholy pines. Above, the waters fret and foam, among rocks and little verdant isles; and just opposite is the Shenandoah Ferry, where the torrent subsides into a little basin, and flows smoothly to meet the Potomac.

The second point of view is just under the cliff on the Maryland shore, where can be seen the waters before and after their junction; the little town lying at the foot of the hill, and behind it a number of beautiful swelling green hills, affording a fine contrast to the barren and grim aspect of the broken ridge of mountains. The emotions of the spectator in this situation are heightened, when he looks up and sees the tremendous crag, hovering directly over his head. The third, and I think the finest view of all, is from one of the green hills, back of the little village, on which there is a small wooden building, called the magazine. It discloses the windings of the Potomac above, where it is a quiet stream, clear and smooth, contrasted with its rough tumultuous course below;

and combines a view of the broken chasm, and opening vista, with a distant amphitheatre of mountains, far in the west, rising one above the other, and presenting, in their mellowing shades, and harmonious, undulating outlines, images of peace and repose, to sooth the mind in the midst of this wreck of nature. There is a canal on either side of the Potomac. The bank of that on the Virginia side, affords a most romantic walk, rendered interesting by the rough passage of the river on one hand, and by the broken cliffs overhanging the other. Under one of these ledges stands a little white cottage, so singularly picturesque as to deserve a description. It is built in a pretty taste, and is literally canopied by a projecting ledge of rock, the top of which being flat, there is a little garden on it, in which I observed rose-bushes, and beds of flowers. Before it is a little grass-plot, bordered by the canal. Will not the muse of this new world, think you, one day or other, awaken in these beautiful scenes, and illustrate them in strains that will make them classical at some future period, like those of Greece, Italy, and Scotland? The same beauty ought to inspire the same enthusiasm everywhere; and the same enthusiasm will, sooner or later, produce the same effects. As yet we have not struck the harp whose strings vibrate in unison with the chords of our hearts. The genius that has awakened in our country, is not the genius of America, but a mongrel imitative creature, expatriated in his affections, and incapable of connecting the poetry of the country with the feelings, attach-

ments, and associations of the people for whom he affects to write. But the time will come, when some chosen genius will find the secret of obtaining a reputation coexistent with the duration of this country, not so much by writing better poetry than other men, as by the addressing his lines to the hearts of his countrymen. He who wishes for a lasting fame, must write for his countrymen, and not for foreign critics.

About six miles up the river there is an ore-bank, belonging to the government, which I thought a great curiosity, until Oliver convinced me to the contrary by proving that several learned professors had accounted for such formations in the most satisfactory manner. Happy ignorance! that can sometimes wonder at things, that the learned consider as mere trifles. The ore lays in a bed of yellow clay, in lumps of various sizes, and distinct from each other. Some of these exhibit evident traces of the action of fire, and came very near bringing Oliver over to the Plutonian system again. Clays, of various and most beautiful tints, are mixed with these masses of ore; and it struck me, that some beautiful mineral colours might be obtained here. The bank is dug—I beg pardon, excavated;—a good writer now-a-days, you know, never uses a monosyllable when he can get a long word. Our language is mightily improved of late, and even colloquialisms have become scientific. “Mamma,” said a little girl to her mother, the other day, “mamma, please to give me some sugar to correct the acid of these raspberries.” This was called *sweetening*, in my time; but see what it is for

young ladies to study chymistry. But to return. The ore-bank is excavated sixty or seventy feet, and is still unexhausted. This seems the easiest way of procuring iron-ore that I have seen. Our little excursion to this place was rendered interesting, by the company of a botanical gentleman, whose love of the science led him to point out various plants to our notice, along the side of the river and canal, and to explain their nature and qualities; so that we received a lecture on botany, illustrated by real specimens, instead of pretty transparencies. This gentleman's name is seldom seen in the newspapers—unlike that of our friend the mammoth professor; neither is he, I believe, a member of forty societies. He resides constantly at this place, cultivating his favourite science, together with a few oddities—which, as they injure no one, every man has a right to indulge; and has found the way to reconcile some of the most inveterate antipathies of nature. It is a singular fact, that I saw a cat purring quietly in one corner of a chimney in his house, while in the other a quail was sitting on its nest, apparently without the least apprehension.

To-morrow we shall cross the ferry into Maryland, and so on towards home. As the remainder of our journey will be along a road with which you are already acquainted, and through cities you have heretofore visited, it is extremely probable that I may not write you again; unless I stay at the seat of government until congress meets, when I shall have something to talk about. Farewell.

## LETTER XLI.

DEAR FRANK,

WHEN I wrote you from Harper's Ferry, I did not think of troubling you with any more letters; but by good fortune, I have since obtained some interesting particulars in relation to the great father of our country, which will, I am sure, afford you singular gratification. The day after my arrival at Washington, which I will not describe, except by a quotation from the witty old Abbe Correa, who defined it to be "a city of respectable distances," I paid a visit to Mount Vernon, to offer my devotions at the shrine of the only saint, I believe, we recognise in our annals. You have had so many descriptions of this illustrious spot, that I shall confine myself to a detail of my impressions on contemplating the simple tomb where repose the mortal remains of a man, who has left behind him a fame, more enviable than that of any mere mortal that ever breathed the breath of life. If it were mine, I would not exchange it for all the vainglories of all the conquerors and destroyers of mankind, from Sesostris down to Napoleon.

The tomb is situated on the summit of the high bank of the Potomac, and commands a view of the fine expansion of the river below. It partakes of the

sobriety of Washington's character. A little pathway, walled on either side, leads you to a plain door of wood, imbedded in brick-work, over which, in the rear, rises a small hillock covered with trees. This is all. At first my impressions were those of disappointment, at the absence of art and decoration. But a better feeling came over me, and soon I felt the inspiration of this touching simplicity stealing into my inmost soul. I forgot every thing before me, and remembered only Washington. There was no majestic work, impudently obtruding itself to draw off my attention towards the triumph of art, and set me to criticising the taste and genius of the artist; there was nothing, in short, to impair the one single idea of Washington. His life and actions passed swiftly in review before me, as I sat with my eyes riveted on the little door that enclosed his sacred dust; and that pure, unmixed, complete character, "without fear and without reproach," gradually embodied itself in my fancy. The silence and repose of the scene was profound, except that now and then the little birds, that had made their nests in the clump of trees which overshadowed the tomb, chirped over my head. It was a calm, sultry, autumnal morning; the leaves were unruffled by a single breath of air, and the wide expanse of the river below was all one glassy mirror, burnished by the rays of as bright a sun as ever shone in the Heavens.

Could the proudest creations of art, add interest or dignity to such a scene? I think not—I felt they could not; that it was out of the power of man to

embellish what nature had made so perfect, or to ennoble the moral excellence of him whose glory I was contemplating. He stands alone by himself, occupying a space which few will ever approach; his glory is without a spot or a stain; his whole life one uninterrupted virtue. In the midst of the most harassing vicissitudes, with the weight of the destinies of this new world on his shoulders—in the depths of almost hopeless adversity, when the fate of his country hung day after day, year after year, suspended by a single hair, he was a hero. When, having won for his country the prize for which he had so long contended, it was in his power to appropriate it to his own purposes, he was a patriot. And when placed by the united voice of the civilized world, on the highest pinnacle of human glory, he was a sage. His head neither turned, nor did his heart become corrupt. He sailed along like the eagle, easily and gracefully, in the highest Heaven; majestic, without effort or affectation; and while the eyes of mankind were gazing upon him, never for a moment forgot he was but a man.

Such a being, thought I, wants no monument. While his name is in the mouths of devoted millions; while his virtues are embodied in every page of the history of his country; and while his glory accompanies the rising sun through his daily course from east to west, to what purpose pile masses of marble upon his bones? He who had no parallel in his life, should have none after death. Others have become illustrious by their tombs; let it be his distinction to

owe no part of his glory to marble, architects, or statuaries, and to enjoy the privilege of sleeping undisturbed in the midst of his kindred ashes. There is nothing annoys me more than the eternal fuss made about the ingratitude of our people, in not erecting some splendid monument to the father of his country. Does not that title constitute an ever-during monument? Is it possible that Washington can require any other memorial, or the people of the United States any other title to remind them of his fame and his virtues, or the measureless debt of gratitude entailed for ever on themselves and their posterity? The best evidence they can give of their fulfilment of this sacred duty, will be, not erecting monuments, but preserving the liberties he bequeathed them, and, as far as possible, sailing in the bright wake he has left behind him. Still it is a becoming indication of gratitude to public benefactors, to consecrate works, in themselves admirable, to their memory, and, without doubt, the act is praiseworthy. But, after all, it is no test of merit to have a splendid monument. Such memorials have been quite as often prostituted to the worst and most insignificant of mankind as to their benefactors, and the truly great may be safely left to history, poetry, and tradition. These, outlast all the rest of the labours of man, and none can ever become immortal, through the means of perishable works. Whatever monuments may be hereafter erected to the memory of Washington, I earnestly hope that none of that name or lineage will ever consent to the removal of his bones from

the sacred spot where they were first deposited, in the midst of those of his kindred. There let them rest in peace, embalmed in imperishable glory, till the trumpet shall sound, and the dead of thousands of years arise to judgment.

The lives of Washington, hitherto written, are principally devoted to details of his public services, and less is known of his private history and habits, than those of any illustrious person of modern times. I am not one of those who think that the fame of such men is enhanced, by coupling it with minute details of insignificant matters and trifling peculiarities, which give a common-place character of littleness to the whole picture. Still every thing relating to such a man as Washington, must be more or less interesting, not only to the present, but future ages; and I have not been remiss, I assure you, in making use of every opportunity that has offered, to collect information concerning the early life and habits of this great and good man, who, of all others, can best stand the scrutiny, because his private and domestic virtues were quite equal to his public services. A character of more consummate excellence is not to be found in history.

As a sample of what I have collected, I will copy for your gratification, a considerable long talk with an old negro, who was formerly a servant of the general, and accompanied him in the disastrous expedition of Braddock against Fort Duquesne. It is furnished me by a gentleman of Alexandria, of high character, and who is on terms of familiar intimacy

with the Washington family. In communicating it, he says, "I have carefully avoided putting down any thing, but just as I received it, and have chosen the old negro's own language for his narratives, and only considered myself as his amanuensis; without reference to any other authority than himself in his own words. I spent several days at Mrs. Washington's; visited him frequently, took hasty notes as we went along, which were collected and amplified during my repeated visits. I give you but a fair copy of what I hastily wrote down on the occasion."

"The old negro Jeremy, or Jeremy Prophet, bears in the family a high reputation in every respect; is as fine a specimen of an old-fashioned servant as you ever met with, an oracle among the blacks, and with the family, a sort of relic of their ancestors that they seem proud to cherish and make comfortable. I was introduced to him, seated before a rousing fire, in an arm-chair."

Old gentleman, said I, I have come a long way to see you, and hear you talk of General Washington. I am told you went with him to Braddock's war.

"Aye, indeed, did I sir, and many's de t'other place I bin wid him—Lord, sir, he was amighty of a man, I tell you."

How old was you at this time?

"Why, I was a good, smart, mannish sort of a chap, big enough to be gemman's servant."

Can you tell exactly how old you were at that time?

"Not 'xacly—but I remember one morning, some

time afore dat, I was at Mount Vernon, wid my old mass John Bushrod, and I hear him say to mass John, John Washington I tell you what I do. Jerry good smart boy, do a man's work, dough he but fifteen or sixteen year old—I give him to you. He ax me if I want to live wid mass John—I say yes—give me plenty meat and bread—and den I belong to John Washington. John he den live wid George Washington, at Mount Vernon.”

Well, now tell me something about Braddock's war.

“When Braddock (he pronounced the name sharp—Braddick) come, dey hear him burning powder good way off, and de people so glad to see him, dey come down to de shore and burn powder too—pop—pop—pop, ebery hour de day. I couldn't tink what de debbil de matter. By'm by, I see de ships, one fore God, most big as Mount Vernon house, dough it wornt no great much of a house den, no how. Next morning, mass John say, Git de carriage, Jerry, I gying to Belhaven, (dey call de place Alexandry now; hah! I Cod! I know'd it when dey more trees than houses, and dey couldn't find places to put Braddick's soldiers in.) Well, when I come to Belhaven, den I seed what de matter—de soldiers and de officers eberywhere. Ebery body want to see dis great man Braddick, so, as I was standing at de stable door, combing my head, de stable man at de armory dare say, Jerry, dare Braddick—and I know'd him, cause nobody else I seed, had star on left breast, and dare he was, 'tween two odder

gemmen. He wornt notting like gemman, take he clothes off, and dat sort of star—he broad, chunky man.

“Well, den mass John and mass George dey talk and talk, and den dey tell me I mus git horses ready, an go 'long o' dem—and five hundred granadier gemmen joined Braddick, and off we go. Well, sir, d'ye mind me? We went ahead, trough de woods, and over de mountains—we stopped at a place dey call Cumberland, week or ten days—I disremember de 'xact time—and den set off 'gin. Braddick halt de foot guard, and send de gemmen granadiers ahead. I went gemman's servant, wid mass John—well, sir—we was quarter mile ahead, goin trough de wood, huckleberry-bushes up to de horse belly, and when we got to a bit of a hill, 'bout as big as fron de house (two or three hundred yards)—if you had eyes to see so far, you would see forty miles, and we seed rise up all round—gemmen got off horses, and 'gan to consult. Neber seed nobody. I didn't know what de debbil the matter, not I. Presently all mounted, come back to Braddick, and dare dey was, telling what dey had seed—and dare stood Braddick, listening wid all he ears, he rifle in he right hand, wid de britch on de ground—he rub he toe in de leeves, like he raking up something—he look at he toe, and seem mighty consarned, but neber say a word. When dey done talking, he put he blowpipe to he mouth, and march was de word. De gemmen granadiers look mighty 'spicious, but neber said notting as I hear. Gemmen granadiers fall

back—foot guards to de front. When we got to dat place—huh! we seed de smoke, we hear de pop—pop—pop, but we seed nobody. De riggler's drap, drap, drap—Braddick neber bark one cannon, but he look ris'lute. I took de bridle of my horse, an I git behind de tree—I Cod, I was skeered—d'ye mind me? I was, I tell you. Braddick put he blowpipe to he mout—'Hurra, my boys, lose de saddle, or win de horse,' he bawl out, and den, 'Oh boys! I'm gone,' and den I seed no more of Braddick on his legs—he down—but I seed mass George take hold one dem brass pieces same as if it was a stick—he look like de debbil—he put one hand on the muzzle so—he sling de sheet lead from dat and de touch-hole—he put—d'ye mind me? dis hand on de muzzle, and dis on de britch—he pull wid dis and he push wid dis—and he wheel it round jis like nottin. He tear de ground up same as a bar shear (a kind of plough.) De powder-monkey jump wid de fire, and den de cannon bark, I tell you. Dey fit and dey fit, and den de Ingens holler; when de thirty pieces of brass cannon bark, de trees fly and de Ingens come down, I tell you. Dat place dey call Rock Hill, and dare dey left five hundred men behind.

“Mass George he semetime arter go mong de Ingens agin—dis arter Braddick's war. John Washington was at Mount Vernon, and I was dare wid him. One Sunday morning, coming from stable, I seed a man riding up de road, wid his horse all in a ladder of sweat. Says I, what's de matter? Says he, 'I don't know, but old misses in mighty trouble,

and sent for mass John, he up?' I say, don't know—it was half hour by sun. When mass John got de letter, he come out and say, 'Jerry, keep your gray horses up in de stable, feed um well, and be ready to set out to-morrow morning, at crack o' day.' Afore light, ebery ting ready, and we set off, and dough we found mighty trouble to get across de ferry, at Colchester, it was so cold and frozen, we got to Dumfries to breakfast, and same evening got to he mother's. When we come in sight of de home, we seed de old lady comin out on two sticks—"

"Two sticks"—what do you mean?

"Two sort of crutches, she hurt her foot or ankle, and was lame, 'bout dat time. She neber say how you do, nor notting, but 'O, Johnny Washington! Johnny Washington, have you heard any news of George Washington? his time's run out, no papers, no news, no notting of him. He's dead—he's dead—I know he's dead—go and seek him, dead or alive—bring his bones, if notting else.'

"We rest one day at Mrs. Washington's, and one at Major Lewis's, over in Fredericksburg, and den we set out. We rested one night at Aldie, at one Billy West's. In de morning, we started by time it was light, and got up to Colonel Snigge's to breakfast, almost fifteen mile. De snow was up to our knees, and dare wornt no much of a road, any how, and so we had hard work to get along, I tell you. But mass John so fond of he brodder George, and de old lady, he go foot sooner dan turn back. Well, it was gitting fur in de day, I was afore on a horse, mass

John was coming close behind, when I look up de road, and I seed a man coming down de mountain, wid his right leg over de pummel of de saddle, woman fashion, wid a broad piece of paper in his lap reading, and de bridle-rein loose in his fingers. He was dressed in a sort of a round jacket, wid moccasin gaiters, his beard mighty long. He cock his eye, and tinks I, I know him, and when mass John come up, he jump off he horse, and cry out, 'Why, John, don't you know me?' And den I seed 'twas mass George, sure enough. And den dey stop in de road and talk, talk, and mass George (the gin'ral mind me!) he call de man wid de horses, and Tom's horse was fairly covered wid leather, and he make dem open de saddle-bags, and, I Cod, if he didn't twist a ting about two or tree times and made a table, and ebery ting he had, down to pepper-box, and ebery ting, and dare dey eat, and dare dey drink, dough it was so cold. I Cod, I had to put my meat and bread in my pocket—and dare was dat man wid notting but his roundabout jacket, and dare wor his great-coat close by on de pummel of he saddle. I Cod, dat man he no more mind cold dan a stone-fence—d'ye mind me? Mass George he set off for Mount Vernon, and we took de road to Fredericksburg agin, and we got dare, I recklect same as yesterday, on Wednesday night, and dey neber know'd notting about it, till we got dare. Dat same night, I went over to Major Lewis's, massa gin me great parcel letters to carry over to him. Major Lewis in de door, and seed me comin to de house,

“‘Hollo, Jerry,’ he say, ‘you hear any ting of Col. Washington?’ he wornt no gin’ral den.”

“Lord, yes, massa,” I say, “I seed him.”

“‘You seed him?’

“Yes, massa, I seed him.”

“‘I ’bieve you lie, you rascal,’ he say.”

“Well, massa, you see if I lie den. I seed him same as I see you, and he be here to-morrow, for I hear him say so. Well, den I hand him de letters, and he say sure ’nough, well, I mighty glad—he holler to Bob to bring me dram—and den I tell him all ’bout how we meet him. Friday the gin’ral came dashing down de road, wid Miles Richardson on anoder horse behind him. Miles he go always wid him whereber he go. And den dare was such rejoicing, for de old lady was fondest of George of all de boys. Dis was arter he come from Braddick’s war, long time. Dey say he gaged to be married den, and when he go away, he leave word, if dey no hear from him in nine months, dey must give him up, and de nine months had den gone. He went out dat spring.”

Where had he been, do you know?

“Been to camp, but whar ’xacly, I don’t know, I tell you what I see, not what I hear—behold you! The gin’ral had a face like he mother, and she was old Martram Ball’s daughter. I don’t ’bieve old Matty Ball ever have any odder child—’least I neber hear o’none. He live at Fleet’s Bay, down in Lancaster county. I have seeming rec’lection of he father, dough I can’t say ’xacly. I live, when a boy,

close by down dar at Norming, midway mass John Bushrod, he not so tall as any of he sons.

“I went along wid de gin’ral when he go down to get married, and Miles Richardson and me had all de trunks in a little wagon. We stopped at Dumfries to feed, and de gin’ral went on afore us—well sir, jist as we cross de creek, at de mills, going up dat hill, smash come down de left-hand fore wheel—I Cod, says I, Miles here a job, and so we takes de trunks and puts dem into Mr. Allen’s ornary—Miles he stay behind, and I sot off for Fredericksburg, ’long wid de horses and de odder man. Lord, sir! when old misses see me come widout de trunks, she was *stuffed*, I tell you—so she says, take my two duns, Jerry, and start by daybreak, wid de two fore wheels o’ de carriage, and bring de trunks and wagon.

“When I seed she was in sich a fluster ’bout de trunks, I goes off and I gits de wheels and de duns, and off I goes a cracking, I tell you. When I got back, I found de wheels wouldn’t fit, and de road so bad, I turn de horses in to get a mouthful, and Miles and I set to work and lashed de trunks, and Mr. Allen, who kept de ornary, make his boys help us, for dey was monstrous heavy, on to de axeltree, and bed of de fore wheels. Miles he got on top of um, and jist as we set off, says I to Mr. Allen, what o’clock is it? and he tell me it wanted tree hours or more to daylight. We had den twenty-four miles to go, but we moved—dem horses, ah! dey was fellows, I tell you—dem same duns neber done nothing but go in old misses carriage—Ned could hardly

handle dem fellows, dey was so pranktious—and she wouldn't let um ever go to mill, and when dey was turned out, she always had um turned out in de bottom land, below de house, whare she could see um all de time. I let um go—Miles he could hardly hold on—but I put on, I tell you, I did that. I was mighty proud, I tell you, when, jis as I turned into de gate, I seed de red daybreak way off yonder. I left de tings and horses in de yard, and went to de house—firs person I meet was de old lady.

“‘Come, Jerry,’ she say, ‘make haste, you ought bin gone long ago.’

“Lord, misses, I done bin, says I.”

“‘You done bin? den you kill your horses.’

“No, misses, says I, horses an't hurt—dough, I Cod, I left um smoking, and I was skeered a trifle, all de time, I tell you—misses an't hurt.

“‘Well, says she, I mighty glad—you tired, Jerry, come in and leave de tings where dey is.’

“Arter awhile de gin'ral he come out and say, neber mind de tings, bring um all over as dey are to Major Lewis's at Fredericksburg. When we got dare, he say, put on boys to Colonel Lomax's, I be dare to-night—take care of your horses, I come on behind, and pay de reck'ning. Den Miles he ride on de trunks and drive, and I ride on a fine horse belonging to massa. We stop at de Bowling-green, and fed our horses, left de gin'ral to come on and pay de reck'ning, and put off. Says Miles, ‘I tell you what, dese horses tired, and I am debilish cold, how far we got to go?’ You know as well as I, says I, and den

we soon come to Colonel Lomax's gate, and I look back an I seed de gin'ral a comin, standing up in he stirrups, dashing on wid he two servants behind him. I hill (held) de gate for him to get trough—

“‘Dat's right boys,' says he—and den he stop and say, ‘Jerry, dat de horse your massa raise at Prospect Hill?’

“Yes, says I, dis de feller.

“We stopped at Colonel Bob Lomax's all night. De gin'ral send word for us to be up and off betimes in de morning to York, and tired as I was, I couldn't sleep, 'fore God, I tought de night was a fortnight long. Well, next morning, we puts out before de crack o' day, and jist about sundown de horses look so bad, we stop to bait, a mile dis side York river—I didn't tink we was so near, I would have gone on.

“De gin'ral he come dashing by, standing in he stirrups. ‘Hitch up,' says he, ‘boys, and push on—you an't got over a mile to de ferry, and its most night—push on, and I'll go and call de ferry over.’

“And so on we went. When we got to de ferry, all de boats, de horse-boat and de foot-boat, gone t'oder side. It was dark den—de gin'ral he walk back and forward to keep warm—he blowed de conchy, and we hollered, and at last we see de foot-boat a coming over—de river look mighty ugly, all white, and de wind blowing like great guns, and it was a freezing hard, I tell you. When de foot-boat totch de shore, de gin'ral slung he great-coat to Tom Bishop, he giv de boat one push wid he square barrelled rifle, and one push wid he foot. He jump in

and say, pull away boys—and when dey seed who dey had got in de boat, dey did put it to it, dey did—d’ye hear me? dey did. Captain Smith and Captain Dandridge kept de ferry, and Captain Smith de ornary, t’oder side. Come on dark night afore de horse-boat come over, and dar we war, no star—ebery ting black but de river—six hours in de boat, half leg deep in water—come on darker and darker—de men pull and pull, but de shore seem as if he done gone—de gin’ral over long ago—d’ye mind me? I hear one man say, ‘Tom, we shall be drown’d’—I was scared, but I keep up—de water splash over de boat—I hear de conchy blow—God, ’twas same as a dram of a cold morning. De people seed we didn’t come, and got skeered. I stood upon de head of de boat, wid de bridle-reins of my horse over my shoulder—if de boat sink, I hang to de horse, I say to mysef. Den I seed someting black a one side—I move over dat side—de boatman say, don’t come dis way—I shout out, ‘come on, come on,’ and den I hear de people in de firs boat shout—and den a rope fall bang, right over my horse. I snatch hold on um, and gave um a twist round de ring, right between my legs, and when dey draw de rope taut, den I feel de boat go ahead. When we got to shore, I feel glad, I tell you—’twas Christmas Eve, an I was most froze—I had pair of gloves, knit wid rabbit’s fur inside, and I Cod, dey war fairly froze. I was neber so nigh being drown’d in my life.

“As we drive by de kitchen door of de ornary, I

seed de light trough de crack ob de door, and, says I, come, Bishop, let's go in, for 'fore God I can't stand it. I knock—come in, say somebody,—and den dare war ebery ting snug enough; presently de gemmen come out—'Ho! boys,' say he, 'cold travelling.' I seed de long-bottom glass in he hand, and spoke up. Yes sir, says I, cold travelling. How fur might it be to Massa Custis's? 'Oh, you jis dare,' says he, and he pours out a glass; 'go round my yard, and dare you right at de house. Where you from to-day?' Colonel Bob Lomax's, say I. When I hear I war so nigh, I was fierce 'nough, for I war always like a hog, all jaw.

"As we pass de winder, I see in, and I seed de gin'ral in de big chair, jis so—and dare was de lady jam up to him, jis so—an' he had de lady's little daughter on he lap. Aha! you feller, say I to mysef, dat what you come for trough de cold, eh!

"Presently madam come out to de door, wid de maid wid her candle. She call de servant, and he come—one great Guinea nigger, wid he face jis like you draw currycomb all ober it. She say, take dem men in and treat um well, and tell Jack take care de trunks. And so we went into de laundry, and den you may depend de tortoise-shell bowl come at full—eh! boys!

"Nex day I hear de people say de gin'ral got he nose frost-bit; and when I seed it look red, I right glad, cause he ought to have some ob de pain, as he got all de fun—ha! ha! I went out to see my horses, and I was in fair misery, for de water had frozen on

um, and dey look so bad; de people hadn't taken good care on um. De gin'ral he come out and say—

“Well, Jeremy, how you horse do?”

“Oh, tolerable, say I.

“Well,’ says he, ‘Jeremy, stay rest yourself long as you please, and take holyday. I shan't want your horses, and if I want a carriage, I can borrow de lady's to go to Williamsburg. But do you stay and rest.’

“Oh, says I, I no want rest. I got wife at home. I rather go spend Christmas dare. I got notting but wheels to take back, and so I tink to go home tomorrow.

“Says he, ‘Jerry, hold your hand.’

“He put he hand in he pocket. I hold one hand, he full um. When I see dat, I hold t'oder—he full dat, too. And when I go to de stable, I count it out in my hat. Aha! d'ye mind me, sir! he had gin me pounds.”

On another occasion, Jeremy said:

“De gin'ral, he care notting for de cold; he hard as a bull, and sometime when de gemmen, Colonel Ramsay, Colonel Carlisle, and de rest ob um, use to come down from Belhaven, he go out to shoot deer wid um. I reck'lect one day he send for me, and tell me, go git de white mare and come wid him, de odder gemmen all ready. I did n't know what dey war going about, but I neber say a word. When we got to a place near Dorrel's Hill, called Hell Hole, dey all stop. De gin'ral put he hand in he pocket an draw out a little bell. He tie um round de gray

mare's neck, and say—'Now, Jerry, you go ahead in a walk, and don't say a word, no matter what you see; don't be afraid, nor open your lips.' I went on about twenty yards ahead, and presently I seed a great buck come jumping along. He stop, he look sideways at me—he lif up one leg—bang! I hear de rifle, and den he drop. I was fit to tumble off de horse, for all I know he might shoot me, too, I Cod. Presently dey all come up. De gin'ral an' I lift de deer on to de mare, an' I lead her home; he want me to git up, but I say, no, tank you.

"He, gin'ral, mighty man for horse. He had a horse dey call Starling—he was wicked debil—de gin'ral raise him at he plantation down at Muddy Hole. He no let nobody ride or break him. When he tree year old, he bring him one Sunday morning, and say he gying to ride him. I look out; I 'xpect ebery minute he git he neck broke, but when he sling he leg over, he dare, no git him off. He mighty man for bad horse. I don't say no better dan he, but I neber seed none."

These little details of Jeremy are, to me, highly interesting, as exhibiting nice traces of the habits and character of Washington. There is not the least doubt of their authenticity. They carry with them internal evidence of the strongest kind, and the minute particulars interwoven in them by the old negro, prove that his memory is still tenacious of every thing relating to his illustrious master.

I have collected a number of other memorials and anecdotes of Washington and his family, which I

will show you when we meet. The first of the name known in this country, was "John Washington," as he styles himself in his will, "of Washington Parish, in the countie of Westmoreland, in Virginia, gentleman." I have a copy of this will, from which it is evident that he was a man of piety and integrity. He directs all the debts and dues which he owes, "in right or *conscience*," to be "well and truly paid," before his estates, which appear to have been very numerous and extensive, were divided. The will is dated the 21st of October, 1675, and is witnessed by John Lloyd and John Appleton. It appears that the Mount Vernon estate, or at least a moiety of it, belonged to the family of Washington at that time. It is thus conveyed: "Item—I give to my son Lawrence, my half of five thousand acres of land in Stafford county, which is betwixt Nicholas Spencer and myself, to him and his heirs for ever."

Perhaps of all the memorials Washington left behind him, the following letter, a copy of which was given me by one of his nearest surviving connexions—I mean the letter he wrote to Mrs. Washington, announcing his appointment to the command of the American army, at the commencement of the Revolution—is one of the most characteristic. It will there be seen with what unaffected modesty he distrusted his own abilities; with what piety he relied on the support of Providence; with what patriotism he devoted himself to his country in her hour of peril; and with what painful reluctance, mingled

with a noble determination, he consented to the sacrifice of all his domestic attachments. The post-script at the end, is not a little curious, as establishing the otherwise incredible fact, that in the year 1775, a full "suit" for a lady consisted of only two and a half yards of muslin. I wonder how many yards it takes now, Frank?

"Philadelphia, June 18th, 1775.

"MY DEAREST,

"I am now set down to write to you on a subject which fills me with the deepest concern, and that concern is inexpressibly aggravated and increased, when I reflect on the uneasiness I know it will give you. It has been determined in congress, that the whole army raised for the defence of the American cause, shall be placed under my care, and that it is necessary for me to proceed immediately to Boston, to take upon me the command of it. You may believe me, my dear Patsy, when I assure you in the most solemn manner, that so far from seeking this appointment, I have used every endeavour in my power to avoid it, not only from my unwillingness to part from you and the family, but from a consciousness of its being a trust too great for my capacity, and that I should enjoy more real happiness and felicity in one month with you at home, than I have the most distant prospect of reaping abroad, if my stay was to be seven times seven years.

"But as it has been a kind of destiny that has thrown

upon me this service, I shall hope that my undertaking of it, is designed to answer some good purpose. You might, and I suppose did, perceive, from the tenor of my letters, that I was apprehensive that I could not even pretend to intimate when I should return. That was the case. It was utterly out of my power to refuse this appointment, without exposing my character to such censures as would have reflected dishonour on myself, and given pain to my friends. This, I am sure, could not, and ought not to be pleasing to you, and must have lessened me considerably in my own esteem. I shall rely, therefore, on that Providence which has heretofore preserved and been bountiful to me, not doubting that I shall return safely to you in the fall. I shall feel no pain from the toil or danger of the campaign; my unhappiness will flow from the uneasiness I know you will feel at being left alone. I therefore beg you to summon your whole fortitude and resolution, and pass your time as agreeably as possible. If it should be your desire to remove to Alexandria, as you once mentioned upon an occasion of this sort, I am quite pleased that you should put it in practice; and Lund Washington may be directed by you to build a kitchen, and other houses, proper for your reception. If, on the other hand, you should be inclined to spend a good part of the time among your friends below, I wish you to do so. In short, my earnest wish, my most ardent desire is, that you would pursue any plan most likely to produce content, and a tolerable

degree of tranquillity, as it must add greatly to my anxieties, to hear that you are dissatisfied and complain of what I really could not avoid.

“As life is always uncertain, and common prudence dictates to every man the necessity of settling his temporal concerns while in his power, and while the mind is calm and undisturbed, I have, since I came to this place—for I had not time to do it before I left home—got Colonel Pendleton to draught a will for me by the directions which I gave him; which will I now enclose. The provision made for you, in case of my death, will, I hope, be agreeable. I shall add nothing more at present, as I have several letters to write, but to desire you will remember me to Nelly, and all friends, and to assure you that I am, with unfeigned regard, my dear Patsy,

“Your affectionate

“GEO. WASHINGTON.

“P. S. Since writing the above, I have received your letter of the 13th, and have got two suits of what I was told was the prettiest. I wish it may please you. It cost fifty shillings a suit, that is, twenty shillings a yard.”

The family of Washington is of English origin, and the name occurs three times in the course of my general reading in English literature. Hume mentions a charge made at the siege of Bristol, during the civil wars, by “Washington.” I think he was on the royalist side. He is, probably, the same

person mentioned in the Diary of Elias Ashmole, as follows:

“1646, May the 22d, 10h, A. M. Sir Ralph Clare moved me to take command about the Ordnance Fort at Worcester.

“June 12th. I entered on my command as Comptroller of the Ordnance.

“June 18th, 1h, 16m, P. M. I received my commission from Colonel Washington.”

Ashmole was a sturdy royalist, and of course Colonel Washington belonged to that party. In the *Musarum Deliciæ*, by Sir John Mennis, and others, originally printed in 1640, there is the following fine tribute to the memory of “Mr. Washington, page to the prince.”

“Know'st thou whose these ashes were!  
Reader thou would'st weeping swear,  
Rash fate err'd here, as well appears,  
Counting his virtues for his years,  
His goodness made them so o'er seene,  
It show'd him three-score at eighteen.

“Enquire not his disease or paine!  
He died of nothing else but Spayne,  
Where the worst Calenture he feels,  
Are Jesuits and Alguaziles,  
And where he's not allow'd to have,  
Unless he steal't—a quiet grave.

He needs no other epitaph or stone,  
But this, ‘Here lies lov'd Washington;’  
Write this in tears, in that loose dust,  
And every griev'd beholder must,  
When he weighs *him* and knows his years,  
Renew the letters with his teares.”

I have written myself weary, and must here conclude my notices of the great saint of liberty. Here ends my rambling, and my rambling letters, for I shall return home from hence, stopping one day at Baltimore, to see some of the little pocket Venuses, and, perhaps, one at Philadelphia, to have a *rouse* with the only club that ever was without a name, and the only club that ever deserved a good one, which ever came under my cognizance. Washington, though beautifully situated, is rather a dull place at this time of the year, except to sportsmen, who find excellent shooting, about the centre of the city. I have seen great numbers of quail, plover, and snipe, within a couple or three hundred yards of the president's mansion, and they *do* say, that deer abound in the "slashes," as they are called, about half a mile north of that building. I can't answer to that fact, but I have seen plenty of rabbits there, and something that looked very much like a wild Indian.

Good by till we meet. I shall often look back on the scenes I have past, in the course of my little extempore excursion, and long remember it as one of the most pleasant of my life. The more I see of my country, and above all, my countrymen, the more I love them. They yield to none on the face of the earth, in the qualities necessary to maintain, and the virtues requisite to enjoy, the blessings of liberty. Nothing but ignorance of each other, and the reports of lying or prejudiced travellers, cause those stupid misconceptions and ridiculous antipathies, that still

subsist between the distant portions of our country. A little social intercourse, and the exchange of a few courtesies, would soon do away with these, by showing distinctly to all, that there may be a difference in two people, without any inferiority on either part; and that in every class, and every climate, and every soil of our country, there is enough of a family likeness, to remind us that we are A NATION OF BROTHERS.

Farewell.

END OF LETTERS FROM THE SOUTH.









JUN 2 - 1938

